Henry Brown Richardson

Henry Brown Richardson

His Ancestors and Family Through American History

Edgar Farrar Richardson

Published by the Author

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For Mireille

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Preface

This book project began about 1990, when I discovered some transcripts of letters my great-grandfather, Henry Brown Richardson, had written as a young man. These letters were so well-written and entertaining that I wanted to learn more about this talented ancestor. I soon found out that he was a Yankee who fought for the South during the Civil War, even though the rest of his family solidly supported the North. Not only was his father a Congregational Minister, but his maternal grandfather, the Reverend David Thurston, was a founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Why did Henry Brown Richardson fight for the South, thereby renouncing the values and loyalties his forbears had held for more than two hundred years?

In response to that question, my focus broadened to include his family, that is, his and my own ancestors. I found our genealogy in *The Richardson Memorial*, by John Adams Vinton, published in 1876, which remains the major genealogical work dedicated to 17th-century Richardson immigrants to New England and their descendants. Vinton's book does not meet current standards because he provided too few references to primary or reliable secondary sources. In my own Richardson line, he made two major errors over eight generations. Still, his book has been a useful outline and starting point for further research.

When I began my own research, other amateur genealogists helped me correct Vinton's errors and fill in the blank spots. Thirty years ago, internet mailing lists facilitated the exchange of reliable genealogical information from reliable sources. Fortunately, similar cooperation continues today, notably through free genealogy websites such as FamilySearch and WikiTree. In any case, a genealogical record of births, marriages, and deaths was not enough, even though it was garnished

with a few personal details. What I wanted was a biography of Henry Brown Richardson and each of his ancestors, and that is what I set out to write. At first, this was going to be a series of informal texts that I would upload to the cloud for my cousins and other family members. Then, out of frustration at finding little information about certain individuals, I began adding historical context and speculating on how that might have influenced my ancestors' lives and characters. In several cases, I have been carried away by the history, which has taken precedence over the individuals' stories.

Although genealogical and historical documentation on the internet has multiplied over the years, there has never been enough. In the pursuit of further information, I have combined the pleasures of tourism with those of reading and touching "primary sources" in some of the principal repositories of New England and Louisiana. During this quest, I have often been lucky enough to experience the thrill of pleasure that rises at the first sight of my ancestors' handwriting on the paper they had touched and folded for mailing. Almost as thrilling is discovering their names in the documents that defined their lives. The pleasures of research and tourism extended beyond the repositories to the towns and cities where they lived and worked. The best surprises often came from the small towns, where the feeling of bygone days lingered on and where librarians and museum archivists would bring forth treasures of relevant information. The guardians of these repositories, large and small, have been unfailingly courteous, helpful, and forthcoming with information I never knew existed. I hope some of them will read this and know how much their work is appreciated.

I have generally limited this book to the eight men in my direct Richardson line and their immediate families. However, certain close relatives from collateral lines, namely David Thurston and Edgar Howard Farrar, have proven important enough to occupy more space in this book than most of the Richardsons. On the other hand, I regret that I have not been able to write more about the early Richardsons' wives and daughters because little information about them was available. Fortunately, Western women have since escaped from the confines of a patriarchal society that often restricted their accomplishments to those that could be recounted on the society pages.

Notwithstanding the lack of a plan when I began writing, the following work grew into a book. Instead of leaving it up in the cloud, where it would soon be forgotten, I am printing copies for my family

and for libraries that I believe are centers of research on the subjects covered here. I hope the following pages will be useful to historians and genealogists, and I firmly expect that one day a young Richardson will stumble upon this book in his or her grandparents' library and realize that these are the people responsible for his or her existence.

Acknowledgments

As a near novice in the study of American history and genealogy, I am particularly grateful to the following persons and institutions for inspiring me to begin this book project and helping me complete it:

Cary Johnson Richardson (1908-1986), whose family genealogy research first awakened the Richardsons to the role Henry Brown Richardson played in Civil War combat and in post-Civil War Louisiana history.

The curators and librarians of Louisiana State University's Hill Library, who have taken such good care of the Henry Brown Richardson Family Papers, with a special mention for Elaine Smyth, who was responsible for the library's special collections when I began my research there.

The custodians of special collections at Tulane and the University of North Carolina, whose documents complement those at LSU.

The librarians and genealogists of the New England Historic Genealogical Society (now known as American Ancestors) who offered me valuable guidance as I began my research on Henry Brown Richardson's ancestors.

The staff of Special Collections at Smith College's Neilson Library, who digitized all of the Reverend David Thurston's letters in the Southworth-Dickinson Family Papers and shared them with me.

Genealogist Jeanne Moore Goldman, who has clarified important issues that I encountered during my research.

Author and genealogist Becky Mushko, who introduced me to books about Liberty (now Bedford), Virginia, where Henry recovered from wounds received at Sharpsburg and joined a lively social circle at Avenel Plantation.

Charles and Peggy Tucker, who twice welcomed me to Myrtle Grove Plantation, where Henry Brown Richardson spent some of his happiest years.

Tensas historian Edith Ziegler (1928-2008), who found important documents for me in the dusty basement of the Tensas County Courthouse.

Mary Bondurant (1930-2005), Edith's fellow historian, who searched the archives of the St. Joseph, Louisiana, Library and found two unpublished typescripts about Tensas Parish on the eve of the Civil War.

My cousin James Kempe McKee (1954-2023), who carefully conserved the Bass and Farrar Family papers that our grandfather found at Myrtle Grove, shared them with me, and donated them to the Hill Library at Louisiana State University.

My cousin, John Kerry Richardson, whose care for family archives and whose research and photographic skills have been constantly helpful.

My fourth-cousins, Rick and Mary Thayer, who shared Rick's grand-uncle's unpublished typescript containing a wealth of information on Henry Brown Richardson's youth and his paternal grandfather's family.

Other cousins of varying degrees, who have shared their memories of Henry and Nannie's family.

My dear step-daughter, Shawn Towey, who helped me design the dust jacket and gave me good advice.

Professional proofreader and indexer Sarah Cook, whose expertise was essential for the completion of this project. Any remaining typographical or similar errors are my fault, not hers.

The years that have passed since I began this book have surely destined me to forget other contributors, and I regret all such omissions.

Over the last 25 years of research and writing, my most important supporter has been my loving and beloved wife, Mireille. Although English is not her native language, she is a good storyteller and has given me excellent suggestions for improving my narratives. She has accompanied me without complaint as we spent much of our vacation time in libraries across the United States. She has shown unfailing patience as I neglected household chores, while isolating myself for countless hours fighting writer's block in my study. I couldn't have done it without her.

Chapter 1
The Puritans

Elizabeth Richardson plodded along the rutted road in a daze. With almost no warning, her well-ordered little world had completely fallen apart. Just a fortnight before, her husband, William, had been glowing with pride as he gazed upon their newborn Benjamin. Now, William's body lay cold and alone in that plain wooden box in the tumbril cart that rumbled along before them. Cold and forsaken was just how Elizabeth felt, too, on that glacial March morning in 1657. When her sister, Alice Cromwell, saw her shiver, she drew closer and put her arm around her waist as the small procession proceeded down the Country Road toward the Newbury Burying Ground. Alice's warmth brought Elizabeth back to the present, and she suppressed a brief sob. Joseph, her two-year-old, must have heard, for he came running up and grabbed his mother's skirt, making it difficult for her to walk. She picked him up and placed him in the back of the cart, where he sat, silently questioning her with wide eyes. He already looked like he would grow strong and tall, but it would be a while before he could walk that long mile to the Meeting House.[1]

"Courage, Goodwives!" called Giles, who was walking ahead beside his horse. "We're almost there." That was Alice's husband, Giles Cromwell, except that he preferred to be called Cromlone, perhaps to distance himself from Oliver Cromwell, who was then ruling England. The cart slowed as it turned into the Burying Ground. Glancing to the left, Elizabeth saw the house of the late Reverend James Noyes, who had died the previous October. He was the Assistant Pastor and Teacher, a stern but kind man, and Elizabeth missed him. If he were still alive, he might have come over for the burial. Not to say any prayers for William, whose fate God had predestined long before, but perhaps to comfort the living. He might have said, “It’s all according to God’s plan, and for a greater good we can’t understand,” thought Elizabeth. “But still….” A

few words of kindness would have been welcome after the dismal sermon they had heard on Sunday.[2]

Giles guided the cart as close as possible to the grave that the men had dug the day before. Edward Richardson, William's kinsman, lifted young Joseph abruptly from the wagon while Giles unhitched the mare. Elizabeth's neighbor, Peter Godfrey, came forward to help push the tumbril cart into position and then maneuver the coffin carefully into the grave. Edward Richardson's wife, Margaret, huddled nearby with Elizabeth and Alice. There were no prayers and no psalms. The women started walking back as the men filled the grave and placed two plain fieldstones at the head an foot. Elizabeth remembered that they had left Peter's wife, Mary Godfrey, alone with Benjamin and Andrew, her own newborn. "Mary will have her hands full, what with the two babes and supper on the fire," she reminded the others, and the women quickened their pace. Her family, her neighbors, and probably a few others would join Elizabeth for a supper copiously accompanied by beer and perhaps stronger spirits. Before midnight, everyone was merrier, and Elizabeth could fall asleep reassured that family and friends would stand by her and the children to help through the difficult days ahead.[3]

Outside of the small group that gathered with Elizabeth that evening, William Richardson's death on March 25, 1657, was hardly noticed in the growing town of Newbury. William had arrived from England about ten years before with his kinsman, Edward Richardson. Edward, who was born about 1617, may have been his brother, but he could have been a cousin or even an uncle. William was still a teenager, and he probably lived with Edward and his wife, Margaret, until he reached 21. When William was part of Edward's family, he worked on Edward's property and contributed to the household budget from his outside earnings. After he reached 21, however, he was ready to strike out on his own and eager to find a wife. The family's close friend, Giles Cromwell, probably introduced William to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Wiseman. William and Elizabeth were married on August 23, 1654, less than three years before his death.[4]

When he married, William received the grant of a standard four-acre house lot, where he built his small family home. The house was probably located on the western side of present-day downtown Newburyport, where Edward Richardson lived, as did the Cromwells and Godfreys. William's plot of land was large enough to plant some corn and beans and raise a few pigs. He could also graze a few sheep

and cattle, although he might not have had access to the nearby commons. He probably did not have enough land to provide adequately for his family, so he also had to work as a day laborer. Labor was in short supply since just about every able-bodied man was busy working his own land. This meant that labor was well paid in Massachusetts at that time, and William probably earned more than he would have earned in England.[5]

Edward Richardson was in Newbury no later than 1649 when the first of his seven children was born. He was an early settler of Newbury, and his name is inscribed on the monument to the first settlers, which stands on the lower green in the original settlement of Newbury. However, he does not appear in the list of original grantees, and there is no evidence that he ever lived near the Parker River, where the founders established the first town center in 1635. In 1642, the Newbury proprietors voted to move the town center to the north, close to the banks of the Merrimack River, and Edward arrived in time to obtain land near the river in the new location.[6]

According to the inventory of William's estate taken by Edward Richardson and Giles Cromwell, his net worth at the time of his death was £40 3s, not a negligible sum. Apparently, he was a hard worker and frugal, befitting the demands of a new frontier and the Puritan morality of the community.[7]

As John Cotton, the leading theologian of early Massachusetts, had written in *The Way of Life* in 1641:

> For a man to rise early and go to bed late and eat the bread of carefulness, [is] not a sinful but a provident care, and to avoid idleness, cannot endure to spend any idle time, takes all opportunities to be doing something, early and late, and loseth no opportunity [to] go any way and bestir himself for profit—this will he do most diligently in his calling. And yet be a man dead-hearted to the world.[8]

William was probably not “dead-hearted to the world,” that is, immune to the attractions of wealth, power, and other earthly rewards. He must have aspired to follow the example of his kinsman, Edward Richardson, who, despite his late arrival in Newbury, had already managed to assure a comfortable future for himself and his family. Edward was a man "who loseth no opportunity to go any way and bestir

himself for profit." One of Edward's neighbors, John Tillotson, did not adapt well to prevailing religious doctrine or practices, and in 1650, he "…was presented [before the County Court] for scandalous and reproachful speeches cast on the elders and others in a publick church meeting on a Lord's day." Tillotson further expressed his displeasure by killing the favorite mare of Reverend James Noyes. The Court fined him heavily, and Noyes sued him. He then sold his property to Edward Richardson, apparently to avoid having it seized to settle the judgment of the court. Edward already owned a house lot on nearby Ordway Lane (now Market Street), but the purchase of Tillotson's lot brought with it an opportunity to become a freeholder, or proprietor of the town. As a proprietor, he would have a share in future distributions of the town's undivided lands. By 1688, he owned two houses and 31 acres of land, including nearly 11 acres in what is now downtown Newburyport.[9]

If William Richardson had similar ambitions for his own family, his early death left them unfulfilled. His sons, Joseph and Benjamin, were thus set back for a generation in the race for land, a competition that would intensify in the coming years. Simple survival, however, was the immediate problem facing his widow, Elizabeth, and her children. The family's assets would soon dwindle, and she could not count on her relatives' support indefinitely.

Fortunately, the network of family and friends proved its efficiency by finding Elizabeth a new husband after a year of mourning had passed. This was not unusual, as widows and widowers were encouraged to remarry soon so that families could function normally. Elizabeth married John Clifford, a recent widower of Hampton, New Hampshire. Looking at the map, it seems surprising that this personal network should extend all the way across the Merrimack from Newbury to Hampton. There had, however, been permanent connections between the two towns ever since a group of former Newbury residents settled Hampton in 1639. In fact, Thomas Cromwell, a close relative of Giles Cromwell, was among those who petitioned for the Hampton charter, and Giles's own daughter, Argentine, later married a resident of Hampton. From 1641 onward, there was regular ferry service across the Merrimack, and this great river was as much a bond as a barrier between the two towns.[10]

Elizabeth and William had two sons, Joseph, born on May 18, 1655, and Benjamin, born on March 13, 1656/57. They probably went to Hampton with their mother and spent their early childhood as part of

the Clifford household. John Clifford, a respected citizen of Hampton, served at least one term as a Selectman of the town. He was also a member of the Church in full communion. Clifford already had a family of four children from his first wife and would have four more with Elizabeth. Even a righteous man finds it difficult not to favor his own children over his stepchildren, but even if John Clifford was less than righteous, Joseph and Benjamin might never have felt themselves to be victims of discrimination. In those days, children were rarely coddled but were treated as small adults from an early age. So, if the Clifford children were favored over the Richardsons, the difference was perhaps imperceptible.[11]

Elizabeth died on December 1, 1667, and Joseph and Benjamin probably did not live with the Cliffords after her death. They were most likely apprenticed to other families in Newbury, where they lived as adults. Joseph was 12 years old when his mother died, and Benjamin was 11, but it was not unusual for even younger children to be apprenticed to other families as servants or to craftsmen to learn their trades. Joseph had the good fortune to be apprenticed to a cordwainer or shoemaker. In 17th-century Massachusetts, shoemaking was a highly skilled craft that required an apprenticeship of five to seven years, after which qualified practitioners were able to earn a good living.[12]

Newbury and the Great Migration

By the time Joseph and Benjamin returned to Newbury, it was a well-established community. The town was first settled in 1635 and originally comprised the present towns of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury. Most of the first families, about 40 persons, had arrived in Boston on a ship called the *Mary and John*. They spent their first year in Ipswich until they received permission from the General Court to establish a plantation from Ipswich northward to the Merrimack River. Another group of about 15 arrived on board the *James* in 1635 and soon joined the first group in Newbury. The original settlement near the banks of the Parker River was laid out around a central green and meeting house. The poorest settlers were granted house lots of four acres and rights of pasturage on the commons. According to guidelines established by the Massachusetts Bay Company in London in 1629, those who had paid for their passage were to receive house lots plus 50 acres, and shareholders in the Company would receive 200 acres for every 50

pounds invested, plus 50 acres for each settler whose passage they paid. Additional acreage was granted in return for undertakings to create essential enterprises such as flour mills.[13]

The first settlers of Newbury were part of the movement known as the Great Migration, which brought at least 16,000 immigrants to the Massachusetts Bay Colony during the 1630s. This migration occurred during the period when King Charles I exercised personal rule in England after dissolving Parliament in 1629. Since the King was no longer able to obtain appropriations from Parliament, he increased revenues by enforcing long-unused fines, reviving levies of doubtful legality, and collecting customs duties without specific authorization from Parliament. He and his father, James I, had already increased their revenues by granting monopolies for trade in various goods such as tobacco and soap. These taxes and monopolies were detrimental to the interests of merchants and artisans, many of whom were Puritans.

The Puritans were even more distressed about King Charles's support for the faction of the Church of England that favored Arminian doctrines and practices. The Arminians believed in the importance of free will and salvation through good works, while the Puritans adhered to Calvinist doctrines of predestination and salvation through faith. During the reign of King James I, the Calvinists seemed to have a strong position in the Church of England hierarchy. However, his son, Charles I, preferred Arminians in his appointments to the episcopacy, culminating in the selection of William Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury. Charles believed that a powerful, unified national church, with himself as the nominal head, was crucial for the government. Such a church required an ecclesiastical hierarchy that reinforced its dominance through the embellishment of churches and an increased emphasis on ceremony and sacraments. For the Arminians, this increased intervention by the church was necessary to support and encourage believers in their quest for salvation through good works. For the Calvinists, however, the pursuit of salvation through good works was considered useless or even sinful, as God had already chosen those who would be saved. The ritualistic high church practices imposed by the Arminian hierarchy were detestable to the Puritans, who believed that God should be worshipped through inner feeling and Christian conduct.

Although Puritans were not severely persecuted during the reign of Charles I, they found it increasingly difficult to practice their religion as they saw fit or even to lead pure Christian lives. After the dissolution of

Parliament in 1629, they could no longer hope to change government policy. Therefore, they chose to emigrate by the thousands during the 1630s and establish the Massachusetts Bay Colony. After King Charles was compelled to reconvene Parliament in 1640, Puritans again saw the opportunity to influence policy in England. Indeed, their power grew steadily during the revolution that began two years later, and emigration became less attractive than direct action in the home country. Thus, there were considerably fewer immigrants to Massachusetts during the 1640s than during the preceding decade.[14]

The Church and Government

Since Edward's and William's English origins are not known, we can only speculate about why they came to the New World. When they decided to emigrate, however, they must have known they were going to join a religious and political community that was profoundly Puritan. Upon their arrival in the colony, heads of families formalized their adherence to that community by taking the oath that they and their families would be subject to the authority of the colonial government and its laws, orders, sentences, and decrees. If Edward and William Richardson came to the colony as servants, their master might have taken the oath on their behalf, because servants were generally treated as members of their employers' families. In any case, the Richardsons were then subject to a body of Puritan law that had been growing by legislative and judicial decisions ever since the founding of the colony.[15]

William and Edward discovered that the laws and government of the colony were quite different from what they had known in England. The charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company allowed the company's "freemen to make laws and ordinances … for the government and ordering of [their] landes and plantacion, and the people inhabiting and to inhabit the same… Soe as such lawes and ordinances be not contrarie or repugnante to the lawes and statutes…of England." However, when they settled in Massachusetts, the Company's lawmakers did not simply adapt English law. They aimed to create a purified Christian community and church, so they developed a new set of laws based on biblical sources, natural law, English law, and practical adaptations to life in the colony. In response to the demands of the colony's freemen, the law was codified in two separate steps: The Body of Liberties, approved in 1641, and The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts, also known as the Code

of 1648. The first was a statement of general principles, while the latter was a complete codification of all laws in force in the colony. The Code of 1648 was organized to be accessible to any literate colonist who wished to study it, making it the first compilation of its kind in the English-speaking world. This provided literate immigrants with an unprecedented opportunity to understand their standing under the law.[16]

According to its charter, the Massachusetts Bay Company was to be governed by its freemen, who were initially the company's shareholders. When the company's government moved from London to Massachusetts in 1630, only about a dozen freemen actually came to the colony. These included Governor John Winthrop, the Deputy Governor, and ten other officers of the Company called Assistants, who held most of the government's power in the early years. In 1631, they appointed a significant number of freemen from among the colonists. At the same time, they decided that only church members could become freemen, meaning only church members had the right to vote for the Governor, the Deputy Governor, and the Assistants. In 1634, the legislative power shifted to the General Court, which consisted of the Assistants and two Deputies from each town elected by the freemen. By extending the right to vote to the freemen of the colony, the Governor and Assistants expanded their power base but did not give up much of their own authority. The Assistants, also known as the Magistrates, remained the most powerful branch of government because they could veto decisions of the General Court and held a monopoly on judicial and administrative authority.[17]

The towns of the colony were given the authority to distribute their land and the autonomy needed to regulate their everyday affairs. All male residents could take part in town meetings. Initially, only freemen, who were required to be church members, could vote. However, in 1647, the local franchise was extended to all male property owners over the age of 24. In theory, this meant that Edward and later William Richardson were eligible to vote in town meetings, although this expanded right to vote does not appear to have been recognized in Newbury before 1650. The residents elected prudential men, or Selectmen, to handle day-to-day business between town meetings. Nevertheless, the towns were closely supervised by the Magistrates through the County Quarterly Courts. The Magistrates did not hesitate to impose heavy fines on towns that failed to make required investments in public works such as meeting houses, schools, roads, and bridges.

Therefore, the towns also served as administrative units to implement policies decided by the colony's central government.[18]

The founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony took great care to entrust the governance of the colony to "the right kind of people," that is, to members of the established church. Theoretically, the government based its legitimacy on the belief that there was a Covenant between God, represented by regenerate Christian voters, and the magistrates for whom they voted. For this reason, the government of the colony has often been characterized as a theocracy, although that was not strictly the case. The principal differences were that church government was separate from civil government and that clergymen were not permitted to hold office in the latter. The civil government enacted and enforced laws concerning private morality and the protection of religious practices. In so doing, their objective was not to restrict individual liberties but rather to create a society to protect "Christian liberty," that is, a society whose members would be free to lead Christian lives. The founders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony did not intend to create a democracy but rather an oligarchic government that would weave a protective cocoon around purified churches.[19]

The civil government also became involved in questions of doctrinal purity by expelling non-conformists such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson and their followers from the colony and by restricting the activity of itinerant preachers such as the Quakers. In 1653, the General Court passed an order forbidding any person to preach in the colony without first obtaining authorization from the elders of four neighboring churches or the County Court. This order was directed primarily against the Quakers, who had begun preaching doctrines that the Court considered heretical. Some of the colonists thought these restrictions were exaggerated. For example, Lieutenant Robert Pike of Salisbury declared that "…such persons that did act in making the law restraining unfit persons from constant preaching did break their oath to the country, for it is against the liberty of the country, both civil and ecclesiastical…." Lieutenant Pike was declared guilty of defaming the General Court and was disenfranchised, declared ineligible to hold any public office, and heavily fined. Pike was well-known and respected in the area, and his friends in Salisbury and neighboring towns presented petitions to the General Court asking for the remission of Pike's punishment. William and Edward Richardson were among the 58 men from Newbury who signed the petition.[20]

The Pike Petition has been cited as an early example of New Englanders' readiness to stand up for their rights of free speech and freedom of religion. It is more appropriate, however, to view the incident as an example of the Puritan government's implacable opposition to unorthodox religious beliefs and practices. When the General Court sent out a commission to investigate the motives of the signatories, most of them, including Edward and William, were fined after being interviewed and made to realize that signing the petition was offensive and inappropriate. The law in question was repealed the same year, but replaced by another providing for the censure of any person publishing any heterodox or erroneous doctrine.[21]

Religion

For the most part, life in the towns proceeded harmoniously, probably due to the conformity of the inhabitants' religious beliefs. The good citizens of the community believed wholeheartedly in the Calvinist doctrines of original sin, predestination, and unmerited Grace. Even though men and women were born sinners, whatever good works they might do could never be sufficient to merit salvation. Nevertheless, God had chosen certain undeserving persons to receive unmerited Grace, the gift of eternal life. Once the chosen ones—the elect—showed by repentance and faith that they had accepted God's offer of Grace, God and the believer were bound by an unbreakable contract that Puritans called the Covenant of Grace.[22]

Although the question of eternal life was thus settled in advance, this did not induce the Massachusetts Puritans to lead lives of pleasure-seeking and idleness. Quite the contrary! Thanks to the Covenant of Grace, the believer's faith had loosened the bonds of original sin so that he or she could at least try to live virtuously. Believers probably would not be completely successful in these efforts, but they would do their best, and their shortcomings would be forgiven. Even those who were not certain to have been saved might be motivated to lead more virtuous lives in the hope that such behavior would bring them greater certainty or at least lead their neighbors to perceive them to be among the chosen. In any case, Puritan Covenant theology had neatly finessed the contradiction between predestination and free will with the doctrine that the Covenant of Grace liberated those who were saved to the extent that they became free to exercise their will to do good.[23]

Massachusetts Bay theologians were so taken with the concepts of covenant theology that they extended them into every facet of political and social life. According to Genesis Chapter 17, the biblical basis for covenant theology, God assured Abraham that the benefits of their Covenant would extend to all his descendants so long as they kept their side of the bargain. Abraham's descendants, of course, became the nation of Israel, and Puritan theologians reasoned that by analogy, a Puritan nation must benefit from the same sort of covenant. As the colony's founders organized the civil government, the concept of a National Covenant justified their system of oligarchic rule. The clergy used the idea as an argument to exhort their parishioners to virtuous behavior; even though the individual could not earn salvation through good works, the community would benefit from obedience to God's laws. As John Cotton put it:[24]

> [A]nd you shall never finde that God rooted out a people that had the Ordinances planted amongst them, and themselves planted into the Ordinances: Never did God suffer such plants to be plucked up; on all their glory shall be a defence.[25]

In principle, Bay Colony communities also had a town covenant, but Newbury records contain no record of such a document. It was the church covenant, however, that most affected the Massachusetts Bay Puritans in their daily lives. The church covenant also distinguished them from other Protestant denominations by rendering them independent from the church hierarchy on questions of church governance. Over time, the text of church covenants became standardized, but the earliest settlers could spend months in consultation before they reached agreement on the obligations of church members.[26]

All churches agreed that congregations must support and discipline their members in their efforts to lead virtuous lives. In so doing, they based themselves on the teachings of Christ as recorded in Mathew, Chapter 18:15–17:

> If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.

> But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
>
> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector….

In short, interference in the personal lives of others was not only tolerated but encouraged, not only for the benefit of church members but also for non-members, whose attendance at church services was required by law. The church thus played an essential role in enforcing order and maintaining moral standards of behavior in the community throughout the 17th century.[27]

Inevitably, there were personal disputes that got out of hand, such as the following assault case involving William Richardson. In January 1651, a witness testified before the Essex County Quarterly Court that "Thomas Coleman Jr. of Newbury came to goodman Sanders' barne and with a great swingell did strike William Richerson athurt the bake and so run away." A swingle is a tool about two feet long used to clean flax or hemp. It is knife-shaped but made of wood, so presumably, William was not seriously injured. Thomas Coleman and William had not been able to settle their dispute in the manner recommended by Scripture, and the case wound up in court. The Court's decision is not recorded, so perhaps Thomas and William got off with a stern lecture. Or maybe the magistrates decided on some public humiliation, such as requiring the guilty party to stand in front of the meeting house bearing a placard stating the nature of his offense.[28]

According to Puritan doctrines, the visible church existing here on earth should be as near as possible to the true church, that is, a church comprising members whom God had predestined for salvation and who had accepted God's offer of the Covenant of Grace. Thus, most early New England churches required prospective church members not only to be upright in character but also to present evidence of having received and accepted saving Grace. Generally, they would recount to the congregation some experience that led them to believe that they might have received the gift of Grace. If a candidate was unsure of their state of Grace, this was considered a positive sign, but a candidate who was too sure of himself or herself might be rejected. Church members who had passed such a test and became church members were referred to as

Visible Saints. In the early days of the colony, only church members could benefit from the sacraments of communion and baptism for their children.[29]

A few churches in the Massachusetts Bay Colony did not require evidence of saving Grace as a prerequisite for church membership, and Newbury may have been one of these exceptions. The first pastor, the Reverend Thomas Parker, and his assistants at Newbury had all been influenced by Presbyterian doctrine and practices. The Presbyterian Church accepted new members upon a simple profession of faith. Although Presbyterians shared the doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, they did not believe anyone in the church could possibly know whether candidates for membership had actually received the gift of Grace and accepted the Covenant. Neither did Presbyterians attempt to externalize covenant theology beyond the individual; thus, Presbyterian churches did not have a church covenant. Many years later, several founding members of the Newbury church testified that Reverend Parker had accepted the elements of the Congregational way and that this agreement was recorded in a church covenant that had mysteriously disappeared. If Reverend Parker became more Presbyterian over the years, it was perhaps under the influence of his assistants, the Reverend James Noyes and, later, the Reverend John Woodbridge, both of whom seemed to favor a Presbyterian system of church governance. In any case, the practices of the Newbury church resembled those of other Puritan churches, with a similar order of worship and, at least in the early days, disciplinary matters and the acceptance of new members voted on by male church members.[30]

Although Presbyterians and Congregationalists were in broad agreement on questions of theology and the order of worship, they differed considerably on church governance. Presbyterian practices were codified in a document entitled "A Form of Presbyterial Church Government," approved by the Westminster Assembly and submitted to Parliament in 1644. The Church of Scotland approved the document in 1645, but the English Parliament never took action on the project. The Congregational practices were prescribed in the Cambridge Platform, approved by a Synod of the Massachusetts churches in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1648. The Cambridge delegates agreed with those at Westminster that every church congregation should have an elder serving as minister of the word and another serving as a teacher, if the size of the congregation warranted it. They were close to agreement about lay elders, with

Westminster finding them necessary to aid the Minister in ruling the congregation and Cambridge considering them optional. In the Presbyterian organization, all questions of church governance, such as the admission of members and censures, were decided only by an assembly of the congregation's officers, including the minister or ministers, several lay elders, and at least one deacon. In contrast, the Cambridge Platform insisted on a conjoint administration by the minister (who was also an elder), any other elders, and all those who were members of the church in full communion. The two assemblies differed markedly in regard to the hierarchy external to the congregation. Westminster provided for several tiers of governing assemblies: the Congregation, the Presbytery, the Synod, and the National Assembly. Each of these assemblies consisted of elders drawn from their subordinate congregations and had authority over them in matters of discipline and doctrine. Cambridge agreed that there might be councils and synods that could rule on doctrinal questions, but refused to let them have anything to do with the ordination of elders or the governance or discipline of church members, which should be left to the congregation, except in cases of maladministration.[31]

Meanwhile, the New England clergy remained attentive to political and religious events in the mother country. From the beginning, the leading clergy believed that the Massachusetts Bay Colony would serve as an example of the benefits that a purified church and government could bring to England and eventually to all of Europe. The Puritan plurality elected in the Long Parliament of 1640 was a hopeful sign for New England observers. Still, the political situation remained confused, especially after open civil warfare broke out in 1642. Three years later, forces under the command of Parliament won the first phase of the war and placed King Charles I under house arrest. For a few brief years, England seemed on the verge of becoming a constitutional monarchy with an established Presbyterian church.

These developments were especially heartening to the Reverend John Woodbridge of Andover, Massachusetts, who had been one of the first settlers of Newbury before he moved westward with the settlers of Andover in 1641. The favorable news that Woodbridge received from his brother, a Presbyterian minister in England, led him to return to England in 1647. He arrived in time to serve as pastor to a Parliamentary delegation that was negotiating with King Charles, then a virtual prisoner on the Isle of Wight. However, the King was still not ready to relinquish

any of his prerogatives to Parliament. He continued to negotiate secretly with his English partisans and the Scots, who renewed the civil war in 1648. The Parliamentary side obtained a rapid victory thanks to the New Model Army, which Oliver Cromwell and his supporters had organized into a formidable military machine. The rising power of the army relative to that of Parliament then led to the execution of the King for treason on January 30, 1649, and, in 1653, to the dismissal of Parliament, and to the establishment of the Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell. This was further than John Woodbridge and many other Puritans wanted to go. Oliver Cromwell favored freedom of conscience for all within the Puritan movement, that is, for all except Catholics and Episcopal Anglicans, and therefore, his regime did not designate an established church. The Presbyterians saw their power limited as that of the Independents grew. Many radical religious and politico-religious movements sprang up, shattering conservatives' hopes for ecclesiastical unity. Although he must have been dismayed by this situation, John Woodbridge remained in England until after the restoration of the monarchy.[32]

A Decade of Crisis

Meanwhile, the Massachusetts Bay Colony enjoyed virtual independence from England for nearly 20 years, during which foreign and domestic wars and profound social and political changes entirely absorbed the mother country. Many New Englanders, therefore, perceived the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II as a threat to their political and religious independence. This external threat added to and complicated a perceived internal threat that had been undermining the colonists' religious objectives during the preceding decade.

Since Joseph and Benjamin Richardson lived their entire adult lives in Newbury, it is reasonable to assume that they spent their adolescent years there after their mother died in 1667. Benjamin probably joined the household of his kinsman, Edward Richardson, while Joseph went to live with his new master to learn the leather-working trade. In Newbury, toward the end of the 1660s, they discovered a town that was becoming a commercial center, thanks to its location at the mouth of the Merrimack River. Newbury merchants had been engaged in maritime trade with the West Indies and England since 1647. Boys from upcountry like Joseph and Benjamin must have been impressed by the

bustling activity around the port near Edward Richardson's home. If they listened to the conversations of their elders, they were also excited by the political agitation troubling the community, which would soon reach a crisis point in the form of an open split in the Newbury church.[33]

It all started soon after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the coronation of Charles II. The new Parliament elected in 1661, called the Cavalier Parliament, turned out to be more royalist than the King and enacted severe restrictions on the non-conforming churches in England, mainly Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist, whose members were the power base of the Cromwell government. In 1662, the Act of Uniformity made compulsory the use of the Anglican Book of Common Prayer in religious services and the ordination of ministers by Anglican bishops. Hundreds of clergymen refused to comply and were ejected from their livings. In 1664, the Conventicle Act forbade meetings of more than five persons for unauthorized worship. The Reverend John Woodbridge escaped this repression and returned to Newbury in 1663. These laws provoked a profound uneasiness in the New England colonies, which the Cromwell government had left free to manage their own affairs.[34]

In 1664, His Majesty's government attempted to strengthen its authority over the Massachusetts Bay Colony by sending four commissioners to examine the conduct of government and to hear complaints and appeals against decisions of the colonial courts. The commissioners arrived with a flotilla of four ships and 300 soldiers. The colonists were relieved when the military force left to seize the Netherlands' Colony of New Amsterdam. The commissioners, however, stayed on and attempted to negotiate amendments to the colony's charter. Negotiations continued despite little progress until 1666. The commissioners then advised the Governor that the King was displeased with the situation and had recalled them to England. The King also requested that the General Court send a delegation to London to explain why they refused to accept the proposed amendments to the charter and changes to the laws of the colony. In a special meeting, the General Court rejected the royal summons because they had thoroughly explained their position to the commissioners.[35]

The colonial legislature was determined not to relinquish one iota of the independence the colony had enjoyed for nearly half a century. Few issues separated the two sides. Contrary to their policy in the homeland, His Majesty's government advocated increased toleration of religious

minorities in New England. The formalities of the Navigation Acts of 1660 and 1663 were annoying for Massachusetts merchants and sea captains, but did not yet interfere with their trade. This would become a serious issue during the next decade, but for the moment, the commissioners were satisfied that the local authorities were taking adequate measures to enforce the Acts. The central point of discord at that time was the refusal of the General Court to acknowledge the royal right of judicial review over its decisions. The colony was "by the pattent a body politicke, in fact and in name," and had "full power & authoritie, both legislative & executive, for the gouviment of all the people heere, whither inhabitants or straingers, both concerning eclesiasticks & in civils without appeale, excepting lawe or lawes repugnant to the lawes of England." A royal right of judicial review would endanger the colony's system of government, the National Covenant, and the entire politico-religious structure they had built.[36]

It is a wonder that His Majesty's government let such brazen defiance pass without taking immediate action to annul the colony's charter. Indeed, some prominent citizens of the colony—including 39 men from Newbury—feared that this might happen and addressed petitions to the General Court urging moderation and dissociating themselves from the legislature's refusal. The Newbury petitioners included the Reverend Thomas Parker and his assistant, John Woodbridge, who perhaps feared the same sort of repression that had happened in England. Their fears proved unwarranted, however, as London's attention was soon drawn to foreign wars and domestic disasters such as the Great Plague and the Fire of London. Although the threat of royal interference remained constant, the colonists continued their independent pursuit of the New England Way for two more decades.[37]

Although the external threat subsided for a time, a concurrent internal threat proved more serious. For some years, it had become apparent that the core leadership of the colony was not being renewed because fewer and fewer of the second and third generations were presenting themselves for church membership. Despite the hardships of the early years, the colony’s founders maintained their commitment to their utopian ideals throughout the first quarter-century. When the second generation came of age, however, they showed less commitment to these ideals, and fewer of them became members of the church. This surprised the Puritan theologians because they had reasoned from their reading of Genesis 17 that the baptized offspring of the regenerate

would themselves be on a fast track toward visible sainthood. But now, many of these young adults either could not or would not present evidence that they had received saving Grace and could not become church members in full communion.[38]

The problem became even more acute when the unregenerate of the second generation were ready to present their own children for baptism, only to find that the clergy, as well as church members, disagreed sharply as to whether such children were eligible for this sacrament. This situation eventually led the Congregational churches to adopt a new status of limited membership, which the church's Synod approved in 1662 over the objections of a substantial minority. According to this "Halfway Covenant," children of full church members who had been baptized but had not yet professed a conversion experience had the right to have their children baptized, but could not take communion or vote on church matters.[39]

If a measure such as the Halfway Covenant had not been adopted, the second and third generations of the colonists would probably have drifted away from the established church. During the 1650s, the colony's government had shown increasing concern over the growing influence of Baptists and Quakers. Henry Dunster, President of Harvard College, had converted to Baptist beliefs, a conversion that led to his dismissal from his post. Quakers even suffered from cruel physical punishment and expulsion from the colony. Many Quakers, however, kept coming back to continue their illegal itinerant preaching, and their persistence led to the hanging of several between 1659 and 1661. When this news reached England, His Majesty's government ordered the end of such extreme penalties and the return of Quaker prisoners to England. Much to the horror of the Boston clergy, a Baptist church was gathered in Boston in 1665 and continued to hold regular services despite official harassment.[40]

In 1662, the clergy had to choose between doctrinal purity and maintaining their moral sway over the community. Most clergymen supported the Halfway Covenant, hoping to conserve their moral authority. A substantial number chose doctrinal purity, and their refusal to implement the Halfway Covenant led to a long, drawn-out public debate. The spectacle of clergy that could not agree on this issue led churchgoers to realize that the clergy were not infallible, undermining their authority in the community. Thus, as historian James F. Cooper has argued, the controversy over the Halfway Covenant opened the first

significant fissures in the doctrinal solidarity of the Puritan churches and led an increasing number of congregations to challenge their ministers' authority.[41]

The position of Newbury's Thomas Parker on the Halfway Covenant is unclear. He probably supported it because he was believed to favor less intensive screening of new members. This was perhaps the issue that prompted Mr. Edward Woodman of Newbury to make his first strenuous objections to Parker's methods of church government in 1663. The church schism that Woodman provoked began shortly after the Synod of 1662 and about the same time that John Woodbridge returned from England. But it was not just the doctrinal question of baptism that troubled dissidents like Mr. Woodman. Equally serious in the eyes of the dissidents was the Synod's perceived infringement on the independence of the individual church congregations. The idea of an external body, such as a Synod, attempting to impose its decisions on reluctant churches smacked too much of Presbyterianism, especially since the Synod of 1662 had also recommended the establishment of a consociation of churches "To seek and accept help from, and give help unto each other…. In case of divisions and contentions, whereby the peace of any church is disturbed…."[42]

The most bitter controversy over the Halfway Covenant occurred in the First Church of Boston during the spring of 1669. A majority of the members not only refused to approve the Halfway Covenant but also opposed the succession of the minority who favored that Covenant and wished to form a separate church. After mediation failed, the Church appealed the matter to the magistrates of the colony, who ruled by a majority of one in favor of the seceders, thus enabling them to establish the Third Church of Boston in May 1669. All the magistrates who opposed the succession of the Third Church were also among those who had opposed concessions to England during negotiations with the royal commissioners. In the following session of the General Court in 1670, the deputies took the unprecedented step of charging the ministers and magistrates who had approved the founding of the Third Church with "irregularities and breach of order and law." Mr. Edward Woodman, then a deputy from Newbury, was one of the leaders who organized this vote. The magistrates refused to concur and were vindicated the following year when a more amenable group of deputies was elected and voted by a large majority to judge the magistrates and ministers as innocent and "unduly calumniated."[43]

Amid this Boston church crisis, dissension was also growing in the Newbury church. The proximate cause was an accusation by half of the membership that Pastor Thomas Parker was not consulting them on questions of church governance. Additionally, the Reverend Parker seemed to focus on his person all the principal resentments and fears agitating Newbury—if not the whole colony—for the preceding decade. Historian Stephen Foster has characterized the Newbury pastor as follows:

> Parker was the only avowed Presbyterian in the Bay Colony, at best a persistent nuisance, at worst an embarrassment abroad, notoriously royalist in his politics, autocratic in his theory and practice of church governance, and inclusionist in his views of membership.[44]

Tension within the church was exacerbated by the ordination in 1663 of Assistant Pastor John Woodbridge, Reverend Parker's nephew, whom many parishioners disliked. Mr. Woodman's party may have had good reason to attribute Presbyterian views to Pastor Woodbridge, who had spent 1647 to 1663 in England and had been closely connected to the Presbyterian faction in Parliament. The church dissidents, led by Selectman Edward Woodman, complained that Pastors Parker and Woodbridge were abusing their authority. Specifically, they accused them of taking all decisions themselves, of not giving the congregation opportunities to discuss and vote on questions of governance, such as the admission of members and censures, and of not allowing members to raise issues they felt ought to be brought before the whole congregation. Reverend Parker replied to such accusations by explaining that church members were free to object to his decisions, but if they did not express their objections, he assumed that everyone agreed. In any case, it was clear that there was no satisfactory safety valve for discontent in the congregation, especially since there were no lay elders to serve as channels of communication.[45]

The discord reached a crisis point in the spring of 1669. On March 30, three members of the Newbury congregation complained to the Quarterly Court at Ipswich that Edward Woodman had falsely and scandalously denounced Pastors Parker and Woodbridge in public. Mr. Woodman defended himself by repeating his accusations against the two ministers, but a majority of the Court ordered him to be "admon-

ished and enjoined to make a publique confession… of his sinful expressions." This split decision did nothing to resolve the conflict. The two parties then went before a council of neighboring churches whose recommendations also proved unhelpful.[46]

Neither party was ready to follow the council's recommendation of friendly Christian persuasion. That became evident even before March 16, 1670, when Mr. Woodman's group attempted to suspend Pastors Parker and Woodbridge. Edward Richardson was among the 41 members who signed the notification of suspension. Theoretically, the congregation had the power to suspend or even dismiss their pastor, according to Chapter VIII, Article 7, of the Cambridge Platform: "And if the church have powr to chuse their officers & ministers, then in case of manifest unworthiness or delinquency they have powr also to depose them." But Reverend Parker had not shown himself to be unworthy or delinquent. His supporters refused to accept his suspension, and Parker responded by excommunicating the dissidents until they confessed their error. It is worth noting that most of those who supported Pastors Parker and Woodbridge had also signed the petition objecting to the General Court's position in the negotiations with the Royal Commissioners. There followed a series of hearings in civil courts and ecclesiastical councils interspersed with attempts at conciliation and mediation.[47]

The dissidents explained their position to a council of neighboring churches that met on April 19, 1670:

> Yea that, which hath been New England's glory, in which God hath come nearer to them than to any other people, And the way, in which the Old and New Testament do prove to be the instituted way of God's appointment for his churches to walk in. But indeed we have cause to doubt that the offense here against us here at home is because we abide constant to these principles and will not turn presbyterians. As for our controversy it is whether God hath placed the power in the elder, or in the whole church, to judge between truth and error, right and wrong, brother and brother, and all things of church concernment.[48]

The Quarterly Court settled the civil side of the dispute during its session at Ipswich on May 29, 1671. The Court found the members of Mr. Woodman's party guilty of dishonoring the name of God and established religion, disturbing the peace, and scandalizing a "venerable,

loving, and pious pastor." The court fined most of them for sums ranging from 11 pounds to six shillings, according to their means and their roles in the dispute. Magistrates William Hathorne and Samuel Symonds dissented from this decision; these two magistrates had also voted against the separation of those who founded the Third Church of Boston. This decision was not, however, a complete victory for Mr. Parker and his supporters because the fundamental questions of church governance—the root causes of the dispute—remained to be settled. The members of the General Court realized this. They asked the churches of Boston, Charleston, Roxbury, and Dedham to send messengers to the church in Newbury to give them their best advice for healing the breach in the congregation.[49]

After receiving the council report, the General Court summarized the result by criticizing both sides: Mr. Parker's dismissal and the dissidents' excommunication were judged to have been precipitous and unwarranted. Their recommendations, however, tended to vindicate the actions of Mr. Woodman's party. On May 19, 1672, the Court recommended that:

- In questions concerning church governance, "…the judgment of the whole church should be clearly manifested…[by] the lifting up of hands."
- Mr. Woodman should attend diligently to public worship.
- Mr. Woodbridge should not impose himself or his ministry on the church.
- Ecclesiastical offenses should not be brought before civil courts before exhausting all other remedies.
- One or more ruling elders should be selected to help Mr. Parker maintain discipline in the church because of his great age and weakness.[50]

The Newbury Church experienced some difficulty implementing these recommendations. Therefore, on October 8, 1672, the General Court named a committee to assist them. The following January, the Church employed a new assistant pastor, the Reverend John Richardson, whose ministry was most effective in healing divisions within the church. Mr. Parker remained minister until 1675, when he retired and was replaced by Mr. Richardson. Mr. Woodbridge resigned as assistant minister in 1672 and subsequently served as Town Clerk of Newbury.

Two years of patient effort had led to a conclusion where neither side lost. The Quarterly Court had upheld the church's authority and its Minister's dignity. The General Court had not overturned this decision but had given implicit recognition to the dissenters' position by applying one of the basic principles of the Cambridge Platform: that in matters of church governance, the Minister and the congregation must decide conjointly. In other words, the Ruling Elder cannot rule without the consent of the governed.[51]

Joseph and Benjamin Richardson

This controversy must have made a strong impression on Joseph Richardson, who was approaching adulthood during the crisis. He had reached an age when religious experience and practice were likely to become important parts of his life. He was too young to have taken an active role in the dispute, as his kinsman Edward Richardson did. Still, the principles of church government that were defined, tested, and reinforced at that time became part of his mindset and that of his descendants and helped determine how they interacted with their community —and ultimately with their nation—for several generations to come. As the Congregational way of church governance was confirmed in principle by the General Court and in practice by its new Pastor, John Richardson, the Newbury church was reunited in 1673 and confirmed in its exercise of moral authority in the community for another generation. Some members of the Congregation were perhaps not reconciled to Congregational orthodoxy; a small Baptist church was formed in Newbury in 1682, and among its early members were families who had opposed the Reverend Parker in 1670. As for young Joseph Richardson, neither his Christian faith nor his confidence in the Congregational way was shaken by this crisis.[52]

According to the practices of the time, Joseph Richardson would have served his apprenticeship as a leatherworker for five to seven years, after which he would have been between 17 and 20 years old. As an apprentice, Joseph found his new master to be the most important person in his life. This would have been so even if Joseph had not been an orphan, because the master was responsible not only for teaching the apprentice his trade but also for his general education and religious and moral upbringing. Whoever he was, Joseph's master was conscientious in fulfilling his responsibilities toward his young apprentice, as

evidenced by Joseph's success in the community as he matured. As Joseph Richardson learned from his master, he would be doing God's work with every pair of shoes he made, and thus, he must strive to perfect his craftsmanship and avoid idleness. In this way, material success became a sign of saving Grace. Still, he would have to engage in frequent soul-searching to ensure that the end he sought was to strive for excellence in his calling rather than to achieve worldly success for its own sake.[53]

The Puritans of Massachusetts had civic duties as well as personal obligations to fulfill. At the age of 16, Joseph would normally have begun his militia training. However, the Newbury church crisis had divided the town's leaders so acrimoniously that they often could not agree on the choice of militia officers. These disagreements continued for more than 20 years and led to disruptions in militia training. Finally, in 1670, in response to orders from the General Court, the two Major Generals commanding the colonial militia intervened and appointed a Lieutenant and Ensign to command the Newbury company. Subsequently, unity was restored in the militia about the same time as in the church. By 1674, the Newbury company was able to elect a sergeant and a corporal, thereby assuring militia training, which Joseph Richardson and other young men of the town would sorely need in the immediate future.[54]

Joseph's brother, Benjamin, probably went to live with Edward Richardson after his mother died. Even when he had reached the age of 22, Benjamin considered himself to be part of Edward Richardson's family. In 1679, when he testified in the witch trial of Elizabeth Morse, he referred to "Cousin Tucker." This was surely John Tucker, who had married Edward's daughter Mary in 1676. While the term "cousin" did not indicate any precise relationship, it does suggest that Benjamin was part of Edward's family. Unlike his brother, Joseph, however, he never found his place in the community. In 1694, Benjamin was found guilty of "Attempting to Comit a rape on the body of Experience Pilsbury." He was fined and sentenced to a severe whipping. We find no evidence that Benjamin ever married or owned property. He died on March 30, 1709, apparently alone and unmourned.[55]

King Philip's War

On Friday, August 27, 1675, Joseph Richardson looked up from his workbench and saw Constable Joseph Pike, who had just knocked at the open door of his workshop. It was unusual for a prominent man like Constable Pike to visit an ordinary cordwainer, especially a young journeyman like Joseph, who had only recently finished his apprenticeship. But Joseph was not completely surprised. He had been half-expecting this visit since his kinsman Caleb Richardson and eight other Newbury men were impressed for active militia service three weeks before. After a brief exchange of greetings, Constable Pike read from the paper he was carrying. Sure enough, it was an impressment warrant signed by members of the Newbury Militia Committee, who directed Joseph and six others to report to the Newbury training ground, supplied with the necessary clothing, footwear, arms, and ammunition. Not quite speechless, Joseph struggled against mixed feelings of pride at being selected and fear that he might not be ready for combat. He swallowed hard. "I'll be there, Constable, but I'm afraid I have no musket." Joseph must have finished his apprenticeship only recently and probably had not accumulated the savings necessary to purchase a firearm. "No worry, the Militia Committee will see you get one." Then, as he looked around the workshop, "At least you have plenty of shoes. God be with you, Joseph!" Constable Pike turned and walked on to notify the next one on his list. Some might try to avoid active service, but he figured he didn't have to harangue or menace young Richardson, whose militia training had shown him to be a reliable lad.[56]

Indeed, the members of the Militia Committee must have judged that Joseph Richardson would be a capable and dutiful soldier. But he was also expendable, which was probably the main reason they chose him. Of course, they didn't put it exactly that way. They just felt that he would not be essential to the smooth functioning of the community during and after this Indian war. What if it turned out to be a long and bloody struggle? What the town would need most during such a war was a reliable supply of food; therefore, it would not be prudent to impress the sons of large landowners, especially with harvest time coming soon. Nor would it be wise to take the sons of the town's leading men, who would probably be the leaders of tomorrow. Joseph Richardson, on the other hand, owned no farmland and had little prospect of owning any. He might well be a competent shoemaker and

an industrious lad, but no one expected him to rise to manage the town's affairs. Besides, he was an orphan and unmarried, so no one would miss him very long in case he did not return. In short, Joseph was an ideal candidate for impressment during King Philip's War.[57]

Conscientious though he was about his obligations to the community, Joseph must have wondered how relations with the Natives had degenerated to such an extent. The English had been living side by side with the tribes in the Massachusetts and Plymouth colonies for nearly half a century, and there had seldom been more than minor skirmishes between the two communities. One or two Native families were living in Newbury near the outskirts of town, and they never seemed to cause any trouble. The recent sermons of the new Pastor, John Richardson (no relation) had given reasons for this calamity that most Newbury residents found convincing. This series of "Jeremiads," as they have come to be known, had begun on June 29, 1675, which the General Court had proclaimed a day of humiliation and prayer." During public meetings throughout the colony, pastors would explain to the assembled citizens why God had not protected them from the perils of Indian aggression as He had in previous years. The reason was that the people of the colony had not fulfilled their obligations under the National Covenant but had let themselves slide into lives of sin. In case the townspeople had any doubts about this, the pastor would then begin the Jeremiad, denouncing a long list of sins that had appeared in the community since the great days of the colony's righteous founders. After being humiliated by awareness of their sins, the colonists were expected to repent and pray for forgiveness in the hope that a merciful God would restore the protection of the Covenant. If they did not repent and mend their ways, even worse calamities might strike them. Such rites of humiliation and prayer had become a regular response to misfortunes such as epidemics, earthquakes, and droughts that might befall the community. Never before, however, had the colonists faced such peril as would soon confront them during King Philip's War.[58]

Pastor John Richardson and other Jeremiahs who spoke that day may not have realized that certain of the colonists' sins had provoked not only the wrath of God but also the hostility of the Native Americans who were attacking them. The Puritan clergy had denounced the sale of rum and other spirits to Native Americans. Drunkenness, however, was less of a problem for King Philip and other New England sachems than the Englishmen's "insatiable desire after land" and their inordinate pride,

both of which figure in the catalog of sins compiled by a Synod of the clergy after the war in 1679.[59]

It had not always been like that. Relations between the English colonists in Massachusetts and the Natives began quite well. Even if they had wished to resist, they were probably unable to do so. The once-dominant tribe, the Wampanoags, had been weakened by diseases brought by previous European visitors. Since the Natives had not developed an immunity to European diseases, epidemics wiped out many of the region's Natives. In any case, the small band of Pilgrims who founded the Plymouth Colony did not threaten Indian control of their ancestral lands. The English were soon able to establish friendly relations with the Pokanoket group of Wampanoags, whose sachem, Massasoit, may even have viewed the Pilgrims as possible allies against the strongest neighboring tribe, the Narragansetts.[60]

Initially, the Natives and the English of the Plymouth Colony treated each other respectfully. When the English wished to acquire additional land, they paid for it, offering merchandise that the Indians were willing to accept. Whether they offered fair value and whether the Indians understood English concepts of land tenure and property rights remain debatable questions. The immigrants of the Massachusetts Colony dealt with the Natives in the same way. Any purchase of land from the Indians had to be approved by the General Court. If, however, Indians acted aggressively or treacherously, the colonists responded with massive retaliation. Even in the early days of the Plymouth Colony, the aggressive Captain Miles Standish led the Pilgrims on preemptive sneak attacks against clans whose sachems the colonists believed to be hostile.[61]

The New England colonists continued to employ this strategy so long as the numerical balance remained in favor of the Natives. In 1637, the Pequot Indians of Connecticut attacked and killed a party of settlers, an attack that had perhaps been provoked by other Europeans. All four New England colonies then raised troops who wiped out most of the Pequot tribe. The Natives of New England were not used to this type of total war, but now they knew what to expect if a severe conflict arose with the Englishmen.[62]

Informal cooperation among the Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies had been effective during the Pequot War, but in 1643, renewed unrest among neighboring tribes led the New England colonies to adopt a more formal organization. In that year, commissioners from

Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven agreed to form a consultative body that they called the United Colonies of New England. The English should, therefore, have been better prepared when hostilities finally broke out, but their growing strength led to overconfidence. By 1675, the English had outnumbered all the tribes in New England. In some ways, the Natives had become dependent on the Europeans, finding their tools, guns, and other merchandise so attractive that they could not resist trading their land away. And a new generation of colonists had come of age, a generation that was more interested in earthly rather than heavenly riches. When inevitable conflicts arose between the Indians and the English, the latter would insist on settling disputes according to English law in their own courts in a manner often humiliating to the Indians.[63]

Toward 1660, the Wampanoag sachem, Massasoit, died. This chief, who had established a relationship of mutual respect with the first generation of colonists, was succeeded by his son, Wamsutta or Alexander, who was much less cooperative. He died in 1662 and was succeeded by his brother, Metacom, named King Philip by the colonists. While Philip attempted to establish his authority over the Wampanoags, he was hampered by increasing confrontation with the English of the Plymouth Colony and was forced to make humiliating concessions, such as paying fines, surrendering arms, and paying an annual tribute. This last humiliation apparently led Philip to prepare for war. After 1673, he began accumulating arms and ammunition and selling ever larger parcels of land to finance their purchase. At the same time, he tried to strengthen his relations with neighboring tribes to secure prospective allies.[64]

The war began before Philip was completely ready. What precipitated hostilities was the hanging of two of Philip's lieutenants under a judgment of the Plymouth Court. The two unfortunates were probably guilty of murdering a "praying Indian" (a Christian) known to be an enemy of Philip, but the evidence against them was inconclusive. After the hanging, the Pokanoket Braves and their allied warriors from neighboring tribes could no longer be restrained. They threatened, pillaged, and burned isolated farms to provoke the Englishmen to draw first blood. The first Pokanoket was killed on June 23, 1675, and the following day, at least ten Englishmen were killed in retaliation.[65]

So far, the Natives had overtly threatened only the Plymouth colonists, but their brethren from Massachusetts Bay quickly responded

to their neighbor's request for help. On June 24, the General Court met and resolved to raise 100 infantrymen and 50 cavalrymen to aid the sister colony. On June 28, several companies from Boston arrived to reinforce the Plymouth men gathered at Swansea, who then set out in search of the common foe. Philip's men generally prevailed in the earliest encounters, skilled as they were in wars of movement and ambush. They retreated along a circuitous route northward, crossing rivers and swamps into northern Rhode Island. There, thanks to their Mohegan scouts, the colonials found and attacked Philip's encampment on August 1, 1675, and won their first clear victory. By the end of the battle, casualties and desertions had reduced Philip's original force of several hundred to a remnant of about 40 warriors. Philip and his faithful followers were able to escape into the Massachusetts Bay Colony and find temporary refuge with the Nipmucs. He eventually set up a winter camp in eastern New York, where he rallied a band of 500 warriors. This incursion of Wampanoags alarmed a neighboring tribe of Mohawks, their traditional rivals, who attacked Philip's band in February 1676 and chased them back through Massachusetts. After the Mohawk attack, Philip no longer commanded a credible fighting force, and he had little influence in the councils of the more numerous Nipmucs and Narragansetts. He finally returned to his tribal home, where he was tracked down and killed by the Plymouth militia and their Indian allies on August 12, 1676.[66]

The Nipmucs, the predominant tribe in central Massachusetts, were ready to move as soon as Philip's braves attacked the Plymouth Colony. In July 1775, they attacked Middleborough, Dartmouth, and Mendon, Massachusetts, and on August 2, they attacked Brookfield, a tiny, isolated village in the middle of Massachusetts. They held the 80-odd inhabitants under siege for nearly two days until 50 colonial troopers arrived in time to save their compatriots. The smaller, isolated towns in the West would also need reinforcements from the more populous East. The siege of Brookfield prompted a large-scale mobilization of the militia in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Local units were placed at various levels of alert, depending on the exposure of their towns to danger. The basic militia units were the local companies organized by towns or in groups of neighboring communities. These companies were subordinate to six regimental commands, one for each county, all under the authority of Major General Daniel Dennison. The local companies usually were not sent on active service out of their

towns; instead, men were impressed from their home companies and placed under officers whom the Council appointed for special service.[67]

The first company drawn from Essex County included Edward Richardson's son Caleb and eight other men from Newbury. These men were impressed on August 5, placed under the command of Captain Thomas Lathrop of Marblehead, and marched westward. By the time they reached Brookfield, the siege had already been raised. Lathrop's company then moved further west to the Connecticut River Valley, Massachusetts's rich breadbasket, where the Natives had begun to concentrate their attacks. The Nipmucs and Wampanoags were reinforced by Agawams and other local tribes, who created such a state of anarchy that it was difficult for the colonials to bring in the harvest.[68]

On August 27, 1675, the Newbury Militia Committee called seven more men, including Joseph Richardson, into special service. They marched down to Ipswich, where they joined a company of more than 100 men, mainly from Essex County, under the command of Captain Samuel Appleton. From there, they must have continued southward toward Cambridge, where they joined the upper branch of what was to become the Boston Post Road. By September 6, Appleton's Company reached Hadley in the Connecticut River Valley, about 140 miles from Ipswich, along rough roads. Joseph Richardson, as a shoemaker, had an advantage over the other recruits since he could ensure a good fit for his marching boots—in those days, right and left shoes were made from the same last.[69]

When the Company arrived in the Valley, Appleton seemed ready to pursue the Natives northward, although his raw recruits were probably worn out after such a long march. Since the English had fared badly in recent skirmishes, however, the local command decided to withdraw from the west side of the river and from the North and to regroup and reorganize their forces at Hadley and Hatfield.[70]

Captain Lathrop and his company were sent to Deerfield to escort the inhabitants and their grain harvest southward to areas less exposed to attack. On September 18, 1675, at a site that became known as Bloody Brook, native warriors ambushed a group of soldiers encumbered with loaded wagons and killed 71 of them. If Caleb Richardson was with Captain Lathrop on this mission, he was one of the eight or nine who escaped with their lives. In any event, the surviving members of Lathrop’s company were integrated into Captain Appleton's company,

and Caleb and Joseph Richardson served in this same company until February 1676.[71]

This disaster and continuing Native raids brought the morale of the defenders to a low point. On October 4, 1875, in response to rumors of a planned attack on Hadley, Major John Pynchon moved his forces, including Appleton's Company, from Springfield to Hadley, but the Agawams attacked and burned Springfield instead. Pynchon then asked to be relieved of his command. Appleton was then promoted to Major and took charge of all forces in the Western theatre, which numbered about 500 men. Although disagreements with Connecticut units under his command hampered his action, Appleton managed to stabilize the situation and won a decisive defensive victory over the Natives when they attacked Hatfield. The army's offensive strategy in the West had proved disastrous, and the colonial command adopted a policy of posting conscripts in key garrison towns. Still, inhabitants of smaller settlements were far from secure, and many took refuge in the larger towns, with some fleeing as far as the East Coast.[72]

As winter approached, frustration was growing among the military authorities, who were unable to find any concentration of Indians they could attack. Public opinion, such as it was, demanded a victory. One potential target was the supposedly neutral Narragansett tribe's stronghold in the middle of a nearly impenetrable swamp near modern South Kingstown, Rhode Island. Ever since the Pequot War, Plymouth Colony authorities had suspected the Narragansetts of organizing conspiracies against them, and suspicion grew as the Narragansetts sheltered refugees from the shattered Pokanoket tribe. The United Colonies decided to eliminate this threat, and their commissioners prepared to attack the Narragansett fort in December. Toward the end of November, Major Appleton and most of his company returned to the East to participate in this campaign, leaving some men to reinforce the local garrisons. Governor Josiah Winslow of Plymouth Colony was placed in overall command of a thousand-man, pan-colonial army: Major Appleton commanded the largest contingent, the one from Massachusetts. To bring the Massachusetts contingent up to full strength, General Winslow ordered the impressment of additional men, including 24 from Newbury. The combined force attacked and burned the Narragansett fortifications and village on December 16, 1675. Four men from Newbury were killed, and 18 were wounded during this battle. Joseph and Caleb Richardson fought in Major Appleton's company, which led

the third wave of the assault on the Narragansett fort. They secured a decisive foothold by taking interior fortifications that flanked the entry point. There were heavy casualties on both sides due to the extreme cold as well as musket fire. The Narragansetts may have lost as many as 300 warriors and an equal number of women, children, and elderly in the ensuing fire. Although the colonials celebrated this as a decisive victory, it proved costly the following year because hundreds of previously neutral Narragansett braves escaped to fight another day and joined forces with the Nipmucs in the North.[73]

The colonial army was also weakened following the attack. Approximately 100 men were killed during the combat or died from their wounds. At least another 100 were wounded. The commissioners of the United Colonies called for more men to be impressed. After these replacements arrived, the army set out again on January 28 to track down the Narragansetts who had escaped from the fort fight. This campaign became known as "The Hungry March" due to the lack of provisions, which, along with the extreme cold, forced General Winslow to abandon the hunt. Since Joseph and Caleb Richardson were not wounded during the battle at the fort, they no doubt participated in the Hungry March along with the rest of Major Appleton's conscripts. By February 5, Major Appleton had marched his men back to Boston, where he resigned from his command. He and his men were then free to return to their homes after enduring nearly six months of the most arduous service of the war. The United Colonies did not impress any more Newbury men for army or garrison service during the rest of the war, and Joseph and Caleb Richardson were able to remain at home and resume their peacetime occupations. Nevertheless, the war was far from over.[74]

After the English stormed their fort, hundreds of Narragansett warriors escaped and encamped at Menameset in western Massachusetts, where they cemented an alliance with the Nipmucs. Together, they planned an all-out offensive to annihilate the colonials, beginning with the Massachusetts frontier towns. During February and March, they attacked and burned Lancaster, Medfield, Groton, and Marlboro, killing scores of settlers and taking prisoners. Lancaster, Groton, and Marlboro were evacuated. The Natives also attacked the coastal town of Weymouth on February 15, proving that no part of Massachusetts was safe. At the end of February, the United Colonies sent out a force of about 600 men to find and destroy the united Indians

in the area around Menameset. After uniting with Major Treat's Connecticut men, they made a desultory search for the enemy, who easily eluded them. On March 8, the army then withdrew to Hadley, where Major Treat's men were available to participate in the successful defense of Northampton on March 14. On April 2, the Boston command ordered the army to return, and Major Savage complied on April 7, leaving 151 men to strengthen the Connecticut River garrisons. More experienced soldiers were needed in the East as the Indians continued their attacks against a dozen well-settled towns throughout Massachusetts. Some Englishmen began to fear that they might even have to abandon the colony.[75]

Spring brought another surprising initiative from the Natives. The Narragansett leader, Canonchet, returned to his homeland with a dual objective: first, to retrieve seed corn that his tribe had hidden there and send it back with their women in time for planting in the Connecticut River Valley, and second, to attack and destroy the largest towns of the Rhode Island and Plymouth Colonies. He led a force of more than 1000 Narragansetts, Nipmucs, and others. In their first attack on March 26, they ambushed a column of 60 Englishmen and 20 friendly Indians and killed nearly all of them. The Narragansetts were only too happy to take revenge for the massacre of their people by pillaging and burning the larger towns of the area, including Rehoboth. Canonchet's bands also severely damaged Plymouth and Providence. Finally, on April 9, 1676, the English, with considerable help from friendly Indians, captured and executed Canonchet. Without their charismatic leader, his followers could not continue their aggressive campaign.[76]

Just when the outlook for the war seemed darkest for the United Colonies, the tide turned in their favor. Until the spring of 1676, the Natives were able to live off the land under Spartan conditions while carrying on their deadly campaign of guerrilla warfare. They had been moving so frequently, however, that they had not found time or space secure enough to sow their traditional corn crops, and they were running short of food. The war had also diminished the harvests of the colonials, but they could make up most of the shortfall with imports through their coastal ports. In 1676, the United Colonies impressed fewer militiamen and assigned them mainly to garrison duty. For offensive operations, they turned to volunteers who were better trained, better paid, and eager to fight. The colonial forces had also improved their tactical intelligence by relying more heavily on information and

advice from their Native allies, such as the Mohegans and the Praying (Christian) Indians, of whom they had been overly suspicious during the early months of the war. The assistance of such allies had led to the capture of the Narragansett leader, Canonchet, and the defeat of his raiders. The colonial forces went on to win decisive victories on the Connecticut River Valley in May and June. A surprise attack on a Native fishing camp at present-day Turner's Falls cost the Natives between 100 and 200 dead and crucial supplies of food for the coming year. Subsequent victories at Hadley and Marlboro further decimated and scattered the remaining belligerents. The war was then effectively won, except in Maine, where Massachusetts's forces continued to suffer humiliating defeats until 1677. In that year, Governor Andros of New York, with authorization from London, sent an armed expedition to Pemaquid, Maine, to reoccupy the area and reopen trade with the Indians. The leaders of this expedition found that they could negotiate rather than fight and, on April 12, 1678, concluded the Treaty of Casco, recognizing both Indian and English rights in Maine.[77]

In Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut, however, the Indians were surrendering in such large numbers that the United Colonies did not know what to do with them. Apparently, forgiving one's enemies did not apply if the English considered them to be less than human. After due reflection, the Massachusetts Bay government decided that "… all natives involved in English deaths would be killed and the remainder sold into slavery. Friendly or harmless natives were allowed to remain in New England but were often bound into servitude or released to a Praying Town or reservation." The sale of Indian captives into slavery had begun early in the war, but few were available before the summer of 1676. New England slave traders may have sold some prisoners in the Caribbean islands, but their success in offloading them to other English colonies was doubtful. Virginia had enough troubles with its own Indians, and Jamaica and Barbados soon outlawed the purchase of New England Indians. Latecomers in the trade may have been obliged to carry their human cargoes as far as Africa.[78]

The New England Confederation's victory in King Philip's War was enormously costly in terms of human casualties. Native victims of the war have been estimated at up to 7000 out of a total Native population of about 10,000 in the New England colonies. For the tribes of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut, this had been a last, desperate effort to expel the English from their lands. The colonials lost

about 800 dead out of a population numbering about 65,000—a ratio that seems derisory compared to the Native's massive losses. Still, nearly half of the colonial towns had been completely or partially destroyed. These were the heaviest losses that the English would suffer in any of the colonial wars. The deceased and disabled were sorely missed, as were the services they had provided in their communities.[79]

* * *

After the Hungry March, Joseph Richardson and other returning militiamen could resume their civilian lives, although they were still on call for sentry duty and building fortifications. Since Joseph was then 21 years old, he had probably finished his apprenticeship as a cordwainer. He then qualified as a Journeyman and might continue to work for his master, find another employer, or set out on his own account. When peace returned, and it was again safe to leave the town, he may have worked as an itinerant shoemaker serving outlying farm families. An itinerant would make and repair the shoes of the families whose farms he visited and receive payment in the form of cowhides, other farm produce, and board and room during his visits. This form of itinerant shoemaking was called "whipping the cat." Isolated farmers were generally pleased to receive traveling shoemakers who would relieve them of a difficult chore for which they were completely untrained. Their families, too, were pleased to have footwear more comfortable and durable than their husbands and fathers could make. As a returning veteran, Joseph would have no trouble recruiting clients if he chose this path to begin his career.[80]

By the time William and Edward Richardson arrived in Massachusetts, the first generation of colonists had won their struggle for existence. The Puritan oligarchy had consolidated its authority within the framework of the corporate charter accorded by King Charles I. The Massachusetts General Court reinforced confidence in the justice and fairness of its rule by enacting in 1648 a legal code entitled The Laws and Liberties of Massachusetts after extensive consultation with the freemen of the town. The clergy of the colony had settled questions of religious doctrine and church governance at the Synod of 1648 when they approved the Cambridge Platform, now considered the founding doctrine of the Congregational Church. By mid-century, it seemed that the Massachusetts Bay Colony was well on its way toward becoming

that "shining city on a hill" envisioned by John Winthrop, its longest-serving Governor. The roots of belief in American exceptionalism had taken a firm hold in the rocky New England soil.

The colony had also become economically secure. The end of the Great Migration and the beginning of the Civil War in England had drastically reduced the support the colonists received from the homeland and forced them to become more self-sufficient and to diversify their foreign trade. As the numerous children of the early colonists came of age, however, the first signs of fissures appeared in the Puritans' facade of social and religious harmony. When King Philip's War threatened the colony's very existence, many began to wonder whether their sins had given God reason to let their communities be "plucked up." After their hard-won victory, soldiers like Joseph and Caleb Richardson could return confidently to found the families of the next generation, but the seeds of profound social and political changes had been sown.

Chapter 2
The Yankees

Revocation of The Charter

In the last years of his reign, King Charles II again turned his attention toward New England. His government's first step toward strengthening control over this area was to annul the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1684. Charles died before his government could establish a new regime. Still, in 1686, his successor, King James II, decreed the unification of all the New England colonies as the Dominion of New England. New York and New Jersey were added to the Dominion in 1688. One of the main reasons His Majesty's government wished to increase control over these territories was to improve enforcement of the Navigation Acts, which were designed to restrict trade with other countries and their colonies and to prohibit the shipment of goods in foreign ships.

These new measures were not well received in New England, where the colonists had been getting along very well on their own for the last 50 years and where colonial merchants had developed profitable trading relationships with foreign as well as English colonies in the Caribbean. Resentment centered, however, on the Governor King James II appointed, Sir Edmund Andros, whose autocratic measures threatened the foundations of the New England way. It was no surprise that a Royal government would enforce toleration of the Church of England, but that Andros should ban town meetings more than once a year and even challenge established land titles, the colonists found intolerable. In November 1688, Andros impressed about 800 men and marched them northeastward to suppress the Indians, who had been relatively peaceful up to that time. The suffering conscripts found and killed no Indians, and the expedition was widely condemned in the colony. The situation was saved in 1688 by the Glorious Revolution in England, when King

James II was overthrown by supporters of his daughter Mary and her husband, William of Orange. When this news reached Boston, the colonists arrested Andros and sent him back to England as a prisoner.[1]

While awaiting instructions from London, Massachusetts restored the Colonial government, including former Governor Bradstreet, just as if its original charter were still valid. The following three-year interregnum was an eventful period for the new Province. The outbreak of war between England and France on May 7, 1689, soon led to Indian attacks from the North. This conflict was named King William's War in the Colonies. Before the Provincial government could be inaugurated in May 1692, the mass hysteria of the Salem witch hunts had already reached its peak. Soon after Governor Sir William Phips took office, he convened a special court to try the accused witches. The court proceeded to convict 30 persons, mostly women, of whom 19 were hanged and one was pressed to death. Influential ministers and laymen soon became uneasy with this stampede toward the gallows, and Governor Phips suspended the court proceedings in October 1692. When trials resumed in January, cooler heads examined the evidence more calmly, and no further witches were executed.[2]

In 1691, the joint monarchs, William and Mary, chartered the Province of Massachusetts as a crown colony. The new Massachusetts Bay Province included Plymouth Colony, Maine, and Nova Scotia. The new regime was more favorable to the colonists than the Dominion was, thanks in part to the skillful diplomacy of the colony's agent in London, the Reverend Increase Mather. Nevertheless, the Province was still subject to a Royal Governor and Deputy Governor appointed by the King. The Governor and the King also had veto power over laws passed by the General Court, which comprised the Provincial Council and House of Representatives. Religious toleration was extended to members of all recognized Protestant churches, although the Congregational church was not disestablished. Property ownership replaced church membership as a requirement for voter eligibility.[3]

Joseph Prospers Amid Frequent Wars

The impositions of the Andros government, which the people of Massachusetts generally found oppressive, did not hinder Joseph Richardson as he made his place in the Newbury community. After serving in King Philip's War, Joseph prospered and became a respected

member of the community. On July 12, 1681, he married Margaret Godfrey, born October 9, 1663, daughter of Peter and Mary Browne Godfrey. Margaret's mother, the daughter of Thomas Browne, was the first English girl born in Newbury. Joseph and Margaret raised a family of nine children, five boys and four girls, born between 1682 and 1704. Although he was a professional shoemaker, Joseph worked as a farmer, too, as did nearly everyone in that economy. Joseph's biggest problem as he tried to establish himself in the community was that he had started late in the race for land, and that available land in Newbury was fast running out. His father had died young and had acquired only the minimum four-acre house plot, which Joseph may have inherited. When he married, his father-in-law gave him one and one-half acres, and shortly afterward, Thomas Browne, his wife's grandfather, gave him one and one-quarter acres on Plum Island. In 1683 and 1684, he received a house lot, a wood lot, and pasture totaling about 20 acres from the Newbury Proprietors. The tax list of 1688 showed that he then owned a house and six acres of plowland with one horse, two cows, and six sheep. On April 24, 1686, Peter Godfrey granted Joseph ten acres of upland in exchange for the one and one-half acres he had previously given him and “For Diverse other good & lawful Considerations [me] Herewith Moving wherewith I doo acknowlege my Self to be fully Satisfied & contented.” This transaction appears to have been a gift to Joseph and Margaret disguised as a sale to avoid possible challenges from Godfrey’s other prospective heirs.[4]

In 1679, the freeholders of Newbury decided to divide the common land in the western part of the town called the Upper Commons. This part of Newbury became a separate town in 1819 and was named West Newbury in 1820, but it was largely unsettled and uncleared at the time of the first division. The freeholders, formally known as the Newbury Proprietors, were the early settlers of Newbury and those who had purchased or inherited their rights and privileges. In a town meeting of March 12, 1642, the Town had decided that the freeholders' rights "shall perpetually belong to the several persons to whom they are allotted and to no other persons whatsoever," except their heirs and assigns. This decision made clear that the freeholders' exclusive rights included their rights to use the common lands, and a town meeting held on March 12, 1642, confirmed that the Upper Commons would "lie perpetually common." On December 7, 1642, a commission appointed by the town to verify the freeholders' rights reported that "the persons only above

mentioned are acknowledged to be freeholders by the towne and to have a proportionable right in all waste lands, commons and rivers…."[5]

Based on the Town's decisions taken in 1642, the freeholders first proposed to divide the entire 6000 acres of the Upper Commons among the freeholders only. The other residents of Newbury opposed this plan and raised the following arguments:

> We think it hard to be deprived of the right of commonage. We pay according to our property as much as you for the support of public worship, the support of schools, the repairing of the roads, and our equal proportion of other taxes, and some of us have served as soldiers for your defence, and yet you have rights and privileges, of which we are deprived.[6]

Due to this resistance, the first proposal was never finalized. The same fate met a 1684 proposal allotting 5000 acres to the freeholders and 1000 to the others. Finally, in 1686, a town meeting approved a plan to divide half the Upper Commons equally among the freeholders and the other half among all the ratepayers, including the freeholders, in proportion to the taxes they paid. This distribution was still vastly more favorable to the wealthier freeholders, who paid more taxes than the other residents. Still, this formula for division of the Commons at least gave token recognition to the rights of other responsible landowners in Newbury. The Town applied the same formula to subsequent divisions of the Lower Commons and lands bordering the Merrimack River. From these distributions, Joseph Richardson received a riverside lot and more than 35 acres of pasture and wood lots between 1684 and 1708.[7]

It is difficult to determine the exact location of Joseph's first home, but it was probably in the area that became West Newbury. Joseph was settled there by 1690 when he joined with 14 others in signing a petition asking the Town to establish a rate for the maintenance of a minister to preach in their west meeting house. The town first refused but finally acceded to the petitioners' request in 1692 after they had appealed to the General Court. The organization of the new church was delayed, however, because the members disagreed over the location of the meeting house and the choice of a minister. In 1696, a rate was set for 64 persons to pay for the construction of the meeting house and the minister's dwelling on the plain near the eastern boundary of the new parish. Of those ratepayers, 24, including Joseph Richardson, objected and

asked that the meeting house be built on Pipestave Hill, a more central location. The church was nevertheless built at the eastern end of the parish and was organized as the Second Church in Newbury in 1698. The Reverend Samuel Belcher was ordained as the first Pastor. Joseph Richardson and his family were members of this church for several decades thereafter, either in full communion or under the Halfway Covenant. In March 1710, the Second Parish voted to build a new church at Pipestave Hill, and the new building was completed there by 1712, despite strong opposition from members who lived in the eastern end of the parish.[8]

On March 20, 1696, Joseph bought a house and approximately 18 acres of land running from Bradford Road (now Main Street) to the Merrimack River. His new home was about half a mile west of the Artichoke River and about half a mile east of Pipestave Hill. His property was next to that of William Boulton, who had finished the main wing of his house by that time. The Boulton house still stands at 810 Main Street at the corner of Way to the River Road in West Newbury, but Joseph's house has been replaced by a more recent one. Joseph's new home provided more adequate lodging for his growing family. The new location on the main road in western Newbury was also favorable for his shoemaking business. By this time, he must have been a master craftsman employing a journeyman or two, and training one or more apprentices, perhaps including his eldest son, William.[9]

He was also eligible to vote in town meetings and provincial elections since the value of his real property must then have exceeded 40 pounds, which the new provincial charter set as the minimum for enfranchisement. Joseph's increasing investment in Newbury real property showed that he was solidly committed to the town's future. This commitment brought with it new responsibilities as well as new privileges. By 1706, he had earned the title of Sergeant in the militia, indicating that he took an active role in training the local defense forces.[10]

Militia service remained necessary after King Philip's War because of the continual conflict between the New England colonies and the French and Native Americans. These French and Indian wars usually began between England and France and their various European allies and quickly spread to their American colonies. For the New Englanders, the theater of war extended from the Merrimack River in the Southwest to the Acadian peninsula in the Northeast. The French considered that the boundary between French Acadia on the East and the English on the

West was the Kennebec River, which empties into the Atlantic just east of Casco Bay, but the English had fishing rights and territorial ambitions further eastward. Inland on both sides of the Kennebec was the Abenaki Indian homeland called Norridgewock, where the French maintained a missionary outpost. Both English and French tried to control the Abenaki using diplomacy, but the French negotiators were more often successful because they were better integrated with the Indians whom they treated as equals. Whenever war broke out, the French incited the Abenaki to attack English settlements on the Maine coast and along the Merrimack River. During wartime, therefore, New Englanders were mainly preoccupied with defending their towns, although they could be mobilized for conquest.[11]

King William's War in America began as the War of the Grand Alliance in Europe and lasted from 1689 to 1697. At the beginning of this war, the political leaders of Massachusetts were negotiating the terms of a new charter, mainly through their emissary to London, the Reverend Increase Mather. The interim colonial government enthusiastically supported the war effort and expected that the colonists' loyalty to the crown would benefit them during the negotiations for the charter. In May 1690, Massachusetts sent Sir William Phips with 800 men to seize the French stronghold at Port Royal, Acadia. The French garrison of 60 men resisted for two days before surrendering. Emboldened by Phips's success at Port Royal, Massachusetts then raised about 2000 men to attack the French citadel at Quebec. Under Phips's command, their fleet of 34 ships sailed on August 21, 1690, but did not reach Quebec until October 17. The expedition failed due to their delayed arrival, shortages of powder and rations, and determined resistance by experienced French troops. English losses were estimated at 230, mostly from shipwreck and disease, including smallpox. The returning ships straggled into Boston harbor from November onward. The expedition left Massachusetts £50,000 in debt, which obliged the new Province to issue paper money and increase taxes.[12]

Meanwhile, in 1689, the French were leading the Abenaki in attacks on English settlements around present-day Falmouth, Maine. Major Benjamin Church, a hero of King Philip's War, arrived with 300 volunteers from Massachusetts, who pushed the Indians back, giving the settlers a brief respite. When Church's force left, however, the Abenaki returned and massacred the settlers. After Sir William Phips was installed as Governor in Boston, he sailed with 450 men to the English

outpost at Pemaquid (now Bristol), Maine, where they completely rebuilt the fortifications in stone. Their campaign against the Indians, however, did nothing to restore protection for English settlers, who vanished from northeastern Maine for the duration of King William's and Queen Anne's Wars. Another new fort further south at Saco Bay was more useful in protecting the colonists as it was closer to the main settlements of Wells and York, where 100 settlers were killed in 1692. Two smaller expeditions from Massachusetts met little success in attempts to control or punish the Abenaki Indians, who were menacing or attacking English settlements along the coast. Still, the Abenaki were impressed by these efforts and, in 1693, signed a treaty of peace that lasted for a year. In 1694, the Natives raided Salmon River, New Hampshire, killing more than 100 villagers.[13]

Men from Newbury and neighboring towns participated in all the major Massachusetts offensives against the French and their Native allies. The militiamen who stayed home, however, were needed to secure their own towns. Newbury militiamen were required to have their arms with them during the working day and the Sabbath and to patrol the outskirts of the settlement at night. In 1695, the Natives attacked the isolated house of John Brown in Newbury and captured nine members of his family. The militia reacted quickly and recovered most of the prisoners. The towns on the north side of the Merrimack were more vulnerable to attack, and some Newbury militiamen were sent across to help man the defenses of Haverhill, Salisbury, and Amesbury. Nevertheless, Indians killed Haverhill residents in a 1691 attack, and again in 1697, when 27 died, and others were taken prisoner. One of the prisoners, Mrs. Hannah Duston, became famous when she, her nurse, and a teenage boy killed ten of their captors and brought their scalps back to Haverhill.[14]

During the last years of the war, both the English and the French were too short of resources to mount any sustained offensives. After the Franco-Indians captured and destroyed the fort at Pemaquid in 1696, Massachusetts retaliated by sending 500 men under Colonel Benjamin Church to raid the Franco-Indian outposts in the province of Acadia. After meager results at Penobscot, they sailed up the Bay of Fundy and landed on the isthmus of the Acadia peninsula. There, they ravaged French settlements at Chignecto for nine days. They went on to the mouth of the St. John River where they laid siege to the French provincial capitol at Nashwaak, but were forced to withdraw and return

to Boston. Tension remained high in the New England theater as negotiations began in Europe. When the Treaty of Ryswick was signed on September 30, 1697, Port Royal and other conquests were returned to their pre-war sovereigns.[15]

Fighting resumed during Queen Anne's War, an offshoot of the War of the Spanish Succession that lasted from 1701 to 1714. In Maine, the conflict was essentially a replay of King William's War. The French became more active in enlisting the Indians against the English and leading their attacks. In 1703, the French rallied 500 Abenakis who raided Wells and York. They also laid siege to the fort at Casco Bay, commanded by Major John March of Newbury, who held out until relief arrived. This was only the beginning as the French and Abenakis moved southward into Massachusetts. On February 29, 1704, French soldiers with about 240 Natives attacked Deerfield, Massachusetts, in the Connecticut River Valley, killed 56 persons, and took 109 prisoners to Canada. In the summer of 1704, Benjamin Church was promoted to Colonel and led a retaliatory mission against the French with a force of 500 Massachusetts volunteers. They first raided Franco-Indian outposts and settlements around Penobscot and went on to attack Grand Pré and Chignecto on the Acadian peninsula. After spreading death and destruction on all their objectives, their fleet returned to Boston with 100 prisoners who were later exchanged for the English captured at Deerfield.[16]

Massachusetts sent two smaller missions up the Kennebec River to Norridgewock during the winters of 1705 and 1707, but they found few Indians and no Frenchmen. Massachusetts then organized a thousand-man expedition against Port Royal, Acadia. Governor Dudley appointed Colonel John March of Newbury as Commander-in-Chief, and the army debarked near their objective at the end of May 1707. After an initial reverse and five days of marching and skirmishing, they forced the defenders to withdraw into their citadel at Port Royal. By that time, the raw and undisciplined Massachusetts recruits were demoralized and in no condition to carry on a long siege. The officers held a council of war and voted to withdraw, and the army and fleet waited at Casco Bay for further orders. Governor Dudley ordered a renewed attack, and Colonel March reluctantly re-embarked with his army and three more colonels sent from Boston to supervise him. Before landing, however, March fell ill and relinquished command to Colonel Francis Wainwright. Heavy bombardment from the citadel kept the assailants from approaching their objective or from destroying the surrounding village, and the

French forced them back to their camp. The defeated army returned to Boston, where Colonel March risked disgrace. He was, nevertheless, entrusted with a smaller force of ships and men, which visited the ports along the lower Maine coast during the autumn of 1707 and tried to find the Indians who had been harassing Wells and York.[17]

On the home front in 1704, the towns along the Merrimack had built a series of blockhouses from Newbury eastward to Billerica, and three men were stationed in each to keep a constant watch. Newbury men were again placed on alert and called to garrison duty. Sergeant Joseph Richardson, then 53 years old, resumed active service in 1708 and participated in a campaign patrolling north of the Merrimack River between Amesbury and the town of Merrimac from August to October 1708. Veteran soldiers organized scouting parties that would seek out camps of hostile Natives in their own territory, mount surprise attacks, and destroy their plantations and reserves of corn. Those who served during the winter were called snowshoe men because the Town supplied them with snowshoes. Joseph Richardson's sons, Joseph Jr. and Daniel, were both in the Second Foot Company of Newbury in 1710, under the command of Captain Hugh March. Joseph Richardson Jr. was also one of Captain March's snowshoe men.[18]

No matter how well the militiamen were trained and mobilized, they could not adequately defend their towns against the Indians' stealthy ways of warfare. Neither did they have much success in tracking them down. Instead, the New Englanders took advantage of their greater numbers and resorted to mass attacks on fixed objectives. Even then, they were not always successful because they lacked professional military leadership and trained soldiers. Up to 1709, Queen Anne's government had not been willing to divert military or naval resources from the European theater to aid the North Americans. In 1708, colonial adventurer Samuel Vetch returned to London and persuaded the Queen and her government to support a two-pronged attack on French Canada. Francis Nicholson, former Governor of Virginia and Maryland, would lead a colonial army from New York up the Hudson River to Montreal, while a British fleet and Massachusetts colonials would sail up the St. Lawrence to Quebec. At the last minute, London canceled the expedition, leaving the assembled colonial armies in the lurch. Colonel Nicholson then returned to London and persuaded the Queen to support a limited campaign to capture the town and fortress at Fort Royale. In 1710, a combined force of 200 British marines and 1500 colo-

nials led by General Francis Nicholson landed near Fort Royale, besieged the fortress for a week, and forced the French to surrender the town, which they renamed Annapolis Royal.[19]

Armed with this success, Nicholson returned to London and persuaded Her Majesty's government to revive their plan for the conquest of Canada. On June 24, 1711, the British fleet and army reached Boston. The city was nearly overwhelmed by its size as the government and merchants scurried to find sufficient supplies for the expedition. On July 30, the fleet of 70 British and colonial ships left Boston carrying 7,500 soldiers, mostly British, and 6000 sailors, under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Hovendon Walker and Brigadier John Hill. While in Boston, Walker had not been able to find a pilot capable of guiding the fleet up the St. Lawrence. Therefore, he and his captains advanced almost blindly when they were shrouded in a heavy fog near the mouth of the St. Lawrence. When the fog cleared, the fleet was in the grip of a strong current that made it impossible for all the ships to change course. Eight ships foundered on the rocks, and nearly 800 men died. Admiral Walker canceled the expedition, and the British fleet and army returned to England.[20]

Formal negotiations for peace began in Utrecht, Holland, on January 29, 1712, and Great Britain, France, and Spain signed a truce on August 19. Final arrangements were complicated because all the European powers were involved in one way or another, but France and Great Britain signed their Treaty of Utrecht on April 11, 1713. New Englanders were pleased that Great Britain retained Newfoundland and the Acadian peninsula, which became Nova Scotia. The new British base at Annapolis Royal would perhaps provide greater security for English settlers in Maine. Still, the men who governed New England were convinced that there would be no lasting peace with the Abenaki as long as the French remained in Canada.

Joseph and Margaret's Children

Joseph and Margaret had nine children, five boys and four girls, all born in Newbury. They all married and had children of their own, except their oldest son, William, born in 1684, who remained a bachelor. Mary, the eldest, born in 1682, married Andrew Riggs of Gloucester in 1704. Joseph Jr., born in 1686, married Anne Riggs of Gloucester in 1712. She was Andrew Riggs's niece. Elizabeth, born in 1689, also married a

Gloucester man named Thomas Roberts in 1713. Daniel, born in 1692, married Sarah Pottle of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, in 1723. Sarah, born in 1694, married Joseph Gutterson of Methuen in 1730. Thomas, born in 1697, married Hannah Pottle of Hampton Falls in 1719. She was Sarah Pottle's sister. Margaret, born in 1699, married Reuben Sanborn of Hampton, New Hampshire, probably in 1727. Caleb, born in 1704, married Tiffen (Tryphena) Bodwell of Methuen in 1736.[21]

None of their children found spouses in Newbury, which seems curious, as they were not social outcasts. Their choice was limited, however, because western Newbury was not yet heavily settled. This also raises the question of how Joseph's family established close contacts with respectable families over such a wide area. Of course, Joseph probably spent his early years in Hampton as part of the Clifford family and had maintained contacts there. He had surely made friends in neighboring towns as a soldier in King Philip's War and renewed these relationships during the later French and Indian wars. Between wars, when plying his cordwainer's trade, Joseph may have had a regular circuit to nearby towns as an itinerant shoemaker.

According to genealogist Vaughn Simon, Joseph eventually acquired about 60 acres of land through private purchases and distributions of the commons. However, it has been impossible to reconcile the acreage distributed in his will with the net purchases, sales, and distributions Simon listed. Joseph's will distributed his rights to commons land equally among his children without mentioning the acreage, which suggests that he may have received only rights to the commons rather than ownership of the former common land.[22]

In any case, he could not acquire enough land to ensure the future livelihood of his five sons. Instead, he arranged for most of them to be trained as skilled craftsmen as he had been. His eldest son, William, probably continued in his father's trade as a shoemaker. William inherited his father's house and continued to live there until he died in 1743. His second son, Joseph Jr., was a weaver, and Joseph Sr. gave him ten acres of land near the Merrimack to help him get started in life. Joseph and Margaret's third son, Daniel, was a housewright and carpenter, and their youngest son, Caleb, born in 1704, was also a carpenter. Only Joseph's fourth son, Thomas, did not practice a trade but relied entirely on farming to earn his living. Thomas married Hannah Pottle of Hampton Falls in 1719. On May 17, 1722, he bought 40 acres across the Merrimack in Haverhill. The property was well situated between the

Merrimack and the highway in that part of Haverhill that soon became the new town of Methuen. His father probably staked him to this purchase since Joseph's will stated that Thomas had already received his part. In 1730, Thomas bought 66 acres from his brother-in-law, Joseph Gutterson.[23]

A survey of West Newbury made in 1729, five years after Joseph's death, shows that Joseph's oldest son, William, lived on the north side of Bradford Road in the house his father had bought in 1695. His second son, Joseph, lived nearby on present-day River Road, which runs along the Merrimack's bank. When William died intestate in 1743, his house and property were divided equally among his brothers and sisters since he had no wife or children. Within the next month, Daniel Richardson purchased the shares of six of his siblings for a total of 246 pounds, which he financed by selling property from his father's estate. He bought the final share of the house and property from his brother Joseph four years later.[24]

Daniel had married Sarah Pottle, the sister of Hannah, his brother Thomas's wife, on February 5, 1723. Daniel was nearly 31, an advanced age for a first marriage in those days. The Pottle girls were the daughters of Christopher Pottle, a tanner of Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, probably a business acquaintance of the groom's shoemaker father. Daniel and Sarah settled first on a two-acre plot bequeathed to him by his father in 1724. There, Sarah gave birth to five children over 13 years. This was a relatively small family at that time, which suggests that Sarah was not in robust health. Her death has not been found in the Newbury vital records, but she probably died before August 4, 1756, since her name does not appear on a deed for property that Daniel sold on that date.[25]

Their first child was Christopher, born in 1724. He married Anna Riggs of Gloucester in 1750, marking the close relationship of the Riggs and Richardsons over three generations. For a while, they lived in Newbury, where four of their children were baptized. They moved northward, probably in the early 1760s, and settled in Raymond, New Hampshire.[26]

Daniel's daughter Hannah does not appear in available records after her birth in 1726.[27]

Daniel Jr. was born in 1730. In 1755, he married Rebecca Cheney, the granddaughter of his next-door neighbor, Daniel Cheney. She died barely three years later in Newbury after their two sons had died in infancy. Daniel Jr. then disappeared from public records for a few years.

A land transaction recorded in 1769 suggests that he moved to New Hampshire and settled near his brother, Christopher.[28]

Their youngest brother, Stephen, was born in 1737. His story appears on the following pages.[29]

Their sister, Sarah, born in 1733, was deaf, which surely placed an extra burden on her family. When her mother died, she must have been about 20 and would not have been completely autonomous. On the other hand, she was probably capable of performing household chores given patient supervision. Once her mother and sister had gone, her sisters-in-law might help with her care, but could hardly be asked to take lifetime responsibility for her. In 1700, the town had built a house for the poor, but no special attention would be given to problems of the deaf for many years. The only possibility open to Sarah's father was to find another family to take her in, probably in return for a sum of money and the limited services that Sarah might provide for their household. She was warned out of Newbury in 1764 and apparently followed her family to Methuen, where she died in 1808.[30]

Daniel Richardson, Carpenter and Housewright

Daniel Richardson must have served the customary seven years of apprenticeship before he could work for himself as a carpenter. As an apprentice, he would have performed a variety of demanding tasks, such as cutting and hauling trees, hand-splitting shingles and clapboards, and rip-sawing beams, posts, and studs. Rip-sawing was particularly hard work for two men on each end of a long saw, with one man in a pit and the other above. At least, they did not have to rip-saw planks because there were sawmills in Newbury to handle that tedious work. Daniel would also learn all the manual skills required by carpenters, the practical mathematics necessary for such precise fittings as morticed and tenoned joints, and how to choose the right wood, often while the tree was still standing. After years of working as an ordinary carpenter, Daniel had accumulated enough experience and capital to become a housewright, or master carpenter, with all the skills necessary to build and assemble houses according to 18th-century standards. To exercise that profession, he needed a variety of tools, a sturdy wagon, and draft animals to haul large tree trunks, beams, and prefabricated structures. He would train and employ apprentices, probably including

one or more of his sons, Christopher, Daniel, and Steven. He might also hire day laborers and would cooperate with other craftsmen, such as masons, joiners, and plasterers. Friends and neighbors of his clients would probably come to help with house-raising. This often involved raising the frame of an entire facade all at once, which could require several dozen men under the direction of the housewright. Assembling such large structures would have to take place at the building site, but all the pieces and smaller structures were often created in the carpenter's workshop. A skilled and experienced craftsman was necessary to coordinate these and other efforts involved in building a house, and this was Daniel Richardson's profession.[31]

Daniel began his career as a housewright when tastes in architecture were evolving toward the Georgian style. In its Massachusetts version, the Georgian style retained the classic clapboards of the earlier period but was usually painted white or yellow rather than left to weather naturally. Facades became strictly symmetrical, whereas, in the first period, the floor plan and structural elements usually determined the external appearance. Windows and door openings were placed in a regular grid pattern, and their proportions were carefully studied. The earlier period's extravagances, such as second-floor overhangs and multiple gables, were abandoned. Finishing touches, such as carvings and false columns, became more sophisticated, but the overall effect was one of greater simplicity. Larger windows were a welcome innovation. Four-by-six-inch window panes arrived pre-cut from England and were set locally in the double sashes of an up-and-down window frame.[32]

The new style was adopted mainly by the wealthy in cities such as Boston and Salem and was less often sought by Daniel's clients in the western end of Newbury. Still, there was a continuing demand for stylistic refinement. This was especially true for interior decorative elements, such as finely turned balustrades or molded wall paneling. However skilled Daniel might have been in woodworking, he was essentially a rough carpenter. Daniel found it advantageous, therefore, to maintain close relations with other craftsmen, such as joiners, who specialized in finish carpentry and cabinet making. His next-door neighbor, Joseph Brown Jr., was a joiner, and he surely maintained contact with other joiners, including Abner Greenleaf, to whom he sold three acres of his home lot in 1758.[33]

The First Great Awakening

Lifestyles as well as housing styles were changing. On Saturday, September 30, 1740, the Third Church in Newbury, then the largest church in town, filled to overflowing to hear a sermon by the itinerant English evangelist, the Reverend George Whitefield. As was often the case when Whitefield preached, the success of this first performance brought so many additional auditors to his next sermon that he had to speak in the open air.[34]

George Whitefield's sermons were nothing like those that most New Englanders heard from their regular pastors. They were the closest approach to theatrical performances that Newbury Puritans were ever likely to see or hear. In fact, Whitefield had been an aspiring actor until a conversion experience led him to reject the theater, which he would thereafter call the church of Satan. Still, he could not suppress his talent as an actor or his need to perform before an audience. Whereas Puritan preachers were confusing their parishioners with speculative theology, Whitefield would dive directly into the drama of biblical stories that he brought to life with bodily gestures and skillful modulation of his powerful voice.[35]

Despite his unconventional style, Whitefield was a sincere, born-again Calvinist Christian whose favorable reputation had preceded him across the Atlantic. Thus, many New England clergymen were eager to have Whitefield speak in their churches during this first visit. To ensure a favorable reception, the evangelist traveled with an assistant who wrote ahead to make speaking engagements and distributed printed handbills in the countryside around the town where Whitefield would speak. Whitefield's skillful use of public relations, as well as his reputation, ensured a good turnout of ordinary churchgoers. Parishioners of the Newbury churches were just as eager for a revival of religious piety and fervor as were their clergy. The Richardsons, who did not live near downtown Newbury, may not have gone to hear the great evangelist, but they could hardly have ignored the repercussions of his message. Those who thrilled to Whitefield's inspiring sermons, however, could not have foreseen that his crusade would provoke not just a Great Awakening but would also set off a new decade of crisis in several of their very own churches.

After the church crisis of 1673, religious life in Newbury had proceeded with little controversy for the next half-century. The Newbury

churches accepted the Halfway Covenant despite the clergy's regrets that proportionately fewer parishioners were seeking church membership in full communion. The Newbury community avoided the Salem witchcraft hysteria of 1692–93. Newbury had already suffered the unpleasant experience of a witchcraft trial in 1679 when Elizabeth Morse was convicted of witchcraft and narrowly escaped hanging thanks to a reprieve from Governor Bradford.[36]

According to the church record, Joseph Richardson's wife, Margaret, was the first of her family to become a member of the Second Church in Newbury. Her name was recorded in 1699, followed by those of her daughter Elizabeth and her son William in 1710. Presumably, they were members in full communion, although Reverend Belcher did not mention this important detail in the church record. His successor, the Reverend John Tufts, clearly noted who had simply "owned their baptismal covenant." Joseph Jr. and his wife, Anne, owned the Halfway Covenant in 1714, as did Thomas and his wife, Hannah, in 1721, followed by Daniel and his wife, Sarah. Joseph Sr. became a member in full communion sometime after 1715, followed by Joseph Jr., Daniel, and their wives before 1738.[37]

In the early days of the Second Church, members who could pay for their own pews had them, while others had to make do with benches or stand in the back. Men and women sat separately on opposite sides of the central aisle. Members who paid the highest assessments for support of the church sat nearest the front. Tithingmen in the congregation were equipped with long sticks to help focus worshipers' attention by prodding those who might become drowsy during the long services. Reverend Tufts enlivened the proceedings by encouraging singing in the church; shortly after his ordination, he published a small book of church music—probably the first of its kind in the colony—to aid parishioners who were not familiar with the singing of psalms in church. Music was not the only reason for Reverend Tufts's success. During the early years of his ministry, church membership increased to a peak of 480 in full communion, thanks mainly to the town's rapidly growing population. The frequent earthquakes during these years convinced many that God's wrath was about to strike them and motivated a higher percentage of parishioners to seek redemption and membership in full communion. Such frightening phenomena were often followed by days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer. Pastors would pronounce lengthy Jeremiads to remind parishioners of their collective and individual sins and to exhort

them to renew their obligations as Christians by "owning the covenant." Such events were precursors of the next decade's revival movement, often leading parishioners to conversion experiences and church membership in full communion. Despite the relative success of his pastorate, Tufts was forced to resign in 1738 when several women of the church accused him of inappropriate behavior.[38]

On January 31, 1739, the Reverend Thomas Barnard succeeded Tufts as pastor of the Second Church. Barnard struggled to gain acceptance throughout his ministry in Newbury.[39]

> His manner of preaching was grave, slow and distinct. He had not sufficient animation in his delivery, but his sermons were rational and judicious, calculated for hearers of thoughtful minds, without that unction which popular preachers have, and which seems necessary to give a charm to public discourses. It was observed also, by men of good sense, that Mr. Barnard's style of preaching was not the most perspicuous.… In his sentiments he was considered as a follower of Arminius rather than Calvin….[40]

In short, Barnard was a boring sermonizer, but he would probably have won acceptance in ordinary times and continued with an uneventful ministry for many years. He was not to be so fortunate.

Little more than a year after Barnard settled into his new parish, George Whitefield appeared and electrified the community with his exciting message of conversion through a New Birth of Faith. This was the beginning of the First Great Awakening in Newbury. Parishioners from all over town began to wonder why their pastors kept delivering cold, confusing, speculative discourse—so different from Whitefield's inspiring, easy-to-understand sermons. Discontent grew as other itinerant evangelists kept the pot boiling by preaching in Newbury and neighboring towns. These "New Light" preachers, as they were known, were following Whitefield's example but with considerably less tact. Whereas Whitefield would speak in the open air rather than enter a church to which he had not been invited, other preachers were not so courteous. Their aggressive behavior understandably provoked the resentment of resident pastors. This ill-feeling erupted into open conflict in the spring of 1742 when the Reverend Nicholas Rogers, a New Light minister from Ipswich, preached in the Third Church of Newbury without obtaining permission from Pastor Lowell. Rogers tried to repeat

this performance in the First Church, but the church's Old Light Pastor, Christopher Toppan, sent him away. Soon after Rogers's interventions, parishioners from both churches formed a new religious society and broke away from the First and Third Churches. After several years of disputes with their former parishes, the dissenters formed the First Presbyterian Church of Newbury. Their first pastor, the fervent New Light preacher Joseph Adams, was too radical to retain his parishioners' confidence and eventually moved to Stratham, New Hampshire. In 1745, they called to the pulpit the Reverend Jonathan Parsons, one of the most prominent and eloquent of the New Light preachers, whom George Whitefield had inspired during his first New England tour.[41]

In the Second Church of Newbury, which the Richardsons attended, dissension grew to crisis in 1746, when a group of 25 persons accused the Reverend Thomas Barnard of preaching contrary to the Gospel. Was Barnard preaching sermons with Arminian interpretations of scripture? Or were the Calvinists in the congregation simply over-excited in the expectation of Whitefield's next visit? In any case, Barnard clearly leaned Arminian in doctrine. In that respect, he was no longer alone in New England; other Congregational clerics had begun to accept the Arminian idea that man might contribute to his own salvation through good works and obedience to God's law. A majority of the Second Church's members supported Barnard, but the minority continued to contest his preaching. The congregation then called on a council of ministers from other churches, which ruled in favor of Barnard in May 1747. The dissidents, however, refused to be admonished and were excommunicated. There is no evidence that any of the Richardsons joined the breakaway group. Despite this victory, Barnard was discouraged by his inability to inspire unity in the Parish and asked to be dismissed. The congregation was reluctant to let him go, but finally ordained Moses Hale as their new pastor in 1751. Reverend Hale, who was open to New Light ideas, welcomed the dissident group back into the fold in 1755.[42]

After his first visit to Newbury in 1740, George Whitefield continued his tour of Massachusetts and Connecticut, where most ordinary churchgoers received him favorably and even enthusiastically. Many of the local clergy, however, were reserved if not hostile to his ideas. Whitefield did not hesitate to criticize the New England clergy for their apparent lack of fervor. He went so far as to say that the ministry should be reserved only for those who themselves had been born again, meaning those who had undergone their own conversion experience. Whitefield's

preaching was provocative, but the actions of his followers in Newbury and elsewhere were often aggressive or perceived as such. Whitefield's second visit to New England in 1745 elicited mixed reactions among the local clergy. The Boston clergy discussed with him the controversies he and his followers had provoked, but he managed to convince most of them that he did not intend to sow discord in the colony. The Congregational ministers from Newbury and several other Essex County communities, however, were almost unanimously hostile to his return. Two ministerial associations of Essex County wrote an open letter to their Boston colleagues, admonishing them for having again opened their pulpits to Whitefield and expressing their firm refusal to do likewise. Thomas Barnard of Newbury, his brother Edward Barnard of Haverhill, their father John Barnard of Andover, and 15 other ministers signed the letter. Nevertheless, in 1747, Whitefield was warmly received in Newbury, where he again preached to large audiences. He returned once again to Newbury in 1770 and preached there on September 10 and 11 during his final revival tour. He continued his tour to Boston and Maine, and returned at the end of the month to Newbury, where he died from a severe attack of asthma. He is buried there in the crypt of the First Presbyterian Church.[43]

In 1740, however, Whitefield still had 30 years of constant evangelizing ahead of him. After helping to seed the Awakening in coastal Massachusetts, he was eager to move on to even more fertile ground in the West. His next destination was the prosperous town of Northampton in the Connecticut River Valley, where he would briefly join forces with another towering figure of the Great Awakening, the Reverend Jonathan Edwards. Edwards had come to Northampton in 1727 as an assistant to his prestigious grandfather, the Reverend Solomon Stoddard. He took full charge of the pulpit after his grandfather died in 1729. In Northampton and other Connecticut River Valley towns, several congregations had already experienced spectacular revivals in 1735 and 1736. George Whitefield's arrival in Northampton coincided with a new surge of revivals, and Edwards welcomed his contributions. Whitefield preached four times from Edwards's pulpit, moving Edwards to tears. Edwards accompanied him to Hatfield and rode with him as far as East Windsor when he left for Connecticut. By 1741, revivals had spread throughout the Valley, and Edwards preached in several other western towns.[44]

From accounts of Edwards's preaching style, one would not have

expected his sermons to bring forth such enthusiastic responses. His manner of speaking was entirely different from that of Whitefield. The content of his sermons, however, spoke directly to the parishioners' emotions.[45]

According to his pupil, Samuel Hopkins,

> His appearance in the desk was with a good grace, and his delivery easy, natural and very solemn. He had not a strong, loud voice, but appeared with such gravity and solemnity, and spake with such distinctness, clearness and precision, his words were so full of ideas, set in such a plain and striking light, that few speakers have been so able to demand the attention of an audience as he. His words often discovered a great degree of inward fervor, without much noise or external emotion, and fell with great weight on the minds of his hearers. He made but little motion of his head or hands in the desk, but spake as to discover the motion of his own heart, which tended in the most natural and effectual manner to move and affect others.[46]

Jonathan Edwards might begin a revival sermon by reminding his parishioners that they were all prisoners of original sin and that there was nothing they could do—no initiative they could take—that might lead to their redemption. They were all such hopeless sinners that they deserved nothing better than eternal damnation and punishment at the hands of an angry God. The following is from his sermon, Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God:

> The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked: his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times more abominable in his eyes, than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You have offended him infinitely more than ever a stubborn rebel did his prince; and yet it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. It is to be ascribed to nothing else, that you did not go to hell the last night; that you was suffered to awake again in this world, after you closed your eyes to sleep. And there is no

> other reason to be given, why you have not dropped into hell since you arose in the morning, but that God's hand has held you up. There is no other reason to be given why you have not gone to hell, since you have sat here in the house of God, provoking his pure eyes by your sinful wicked manner of attending his solemn worship. Yea, there is nothing else that is to be given as a reason why you do not this very moment drop down into hell.[47]

When emotions of guilt and dread had reached their peak, the preacher would reverse course and assure his listeners that, despite their innate wickedness, God had chosen to save some of those who would have faith. Edwards continued:

> And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has flung the door of mercy wide open, and stands in the door calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him and pressing into the Kingdom of God. Many are daily coming from the east, west, north and south; many that were very likely in the same miserable condition that you are in are in now a happy state, with their hearts filled with love to him that has loved them and washed them from their sins in his own blood, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. How awful is it to be left behind at such a day![48]

Edwards read this sermon to a congregation at Enfield, Connecticut, on July 8, 1741. His auditors “were notorious for their apathy,” but during the sermon, they became “deeply impressed and bowed down, with an awful conviction of their sin and danger. There was such a breathing of distress and weeping, that the preacher was obliged to speak to the people and desire silence, that he might be heard.”[49]

Such preaching produced a series of seemingly miraculous experiences during which listeners were "converted,” that is, touched by the experience of undeserved Grace. In a letter to the Reverend Benjamin Colman, Edwards reported a wide variety in the subjects’ mental and physical conditions during the conversion process. The cycle generally began with despair and ended with the joyful assurance of saving Grace. This conversion cycle might be completed in a single meeting, but could drag on much longer. “There is in nothing a greater difference, in different persons, than with respect to the time of their being under trou-

ble; some but a few days, and others for months or years." One of Edwards's parishioners, who was probably depressive by nature, experienced such despair that he could see no issue; his suicide cast such a pall over the community that the Northampton revivals did not resume for three years. From 1740 onward, however, Northampton and neighboring towns in the Connecticut Valley experienced another series of revivals lasting through 1745.[50]

Jonathan Edwards was the leading figure in the western phase of the Great Awakening. Although Edwards was not as gifted an orator as George Whitefield, he was a perceptive observer of human conduct and character. That gift, plus a keen interest in the Newtonian revolution in science and philosophy, led Edwards to write a series of essays that have since marked him as one of the greatest theologians that North America has produced. Edwards's theology could be considered the last stand of Puritanism in America at a time when many New England divines were turning toward Arminianism. Edwards was more Calvinist than Calvin in that he stripped the doctrine of excess baggage from the Middle Ages and of compromises accumulated since then. Edwards rejected the concept of covenant theology; he would not entertain the idea that man could negotiate with God on a basis approaching equality as if engaging in a commercial transaction. The Covenant of Grace could too easily be misunderstood as a commitment by God to accord redemption to anyone who demonstrated his or her sincere Christian faith. Edwards maintained that man was powerless to take any action that could earn him redemption. Likewise, the correlation between faith and redemption did not imply that faith was a sufficient cause of redemption. God's will remained the ultimate cause of man's redemption, just as it must have been the ultimate cause of the movements of celestial bodies and of gravitational attraction.[51]

Newtonian physics was an important influence on Edwards' thinking, but just as important were the writings of John Locke on perception. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, Locke clearly demonstrated that all our ideas come to us either through sensation or reflection and that our most fundamental ideas are the perceptions that reach us directly through our senses. These sensory perceptions then serve as the building blocks for more complex ideas that we create through reflection. As speculation leads to more complexity, however, we can move ever farther from sensory input and risk forming ideas that no longer correspond to reality.[52]

Similarly, Edwards believed that through their conversion experience, those whom God had chosen for redemption received a direct sensory perception of God's excellency, as if through their own senses and intellect:

> The natural faculties are the subject of this light: And they are the subject in such a manner that they are not merely passive, but active in it; the acts and exercises of man's understanding are concerned and made use of in it. God, in letting in this light into the soul, deals with man according to his nature, or as a rational creature; and makes use of his human faculties. But yet this light is not the less immediately from God for that; though the faculties are made use of, it is as the subject and not as the cause; and that acting of the faculties in it, is not the cause, but is either implied in the thing itself, (in the light that is imparted,) or is the consequence of it. As the use that we make of our eyes in beholding various objects, when the sun arises, is not the cause of the light that discloses those objects to us.

This experience, therefore, blessed the truly redeemed with an idea of God that could never be attained or improved upon through speculative reflection or discourse.

> This is the most excellent and divine wisdom that any creature is capable of. It is more excellent than any human learning; it is far more excellent than all the knowledge of the greatest philosophers or statesmen. Yea, the least glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Christ doth more exalt and ennoble the soul than all the knowledge of those that have the greatest speculative understanding in divinity without grace.[53]

He defined and elaborated on this experience in his sermon, *A Divine and Spiritual Light, Immediately Imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of God*. Edwards reached this conclusion through his own conversion experience and by observing his parishioners during the revivals of 1735 and 1736.[54]

In his letter, A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God, Edwards wrote that:

> Persons after their conversion often speak of things of religion as seeming new to them; that preaching is a new thing; that it seems to them they never heard preaching before; that the Bible is a new book: they find there new chapters, new psalms, new histories, because they see them in a new light.[55]

The term "New Light" stuck to the revivalists, distinguishing them from the Old Lights, who represented the standing order. Aside from revivalism, however, New Light doctrine was not that new; it was instead a reaffirmation of the essential Calvinist doctrines of the absolute sovereignty of God, original sin, predestination, and salvation by faith alone. Edwards wrote almost continuously on these subjects and his revival experiences, and his work was widely read and hotly debated among the New England clergy.

Edwards's preaching aroused such fervor in Northampton that New Light revivals spread throughout the neighboring parishes in the Connecticut River Valley. During these revivals, even the sharpest community dissensions seemed to dissolve for a time into an ambiance of sweetness and light. But Edwards was also making enemies in the Valley. Well-to-do community leaders were not happy with frequent Calvinist reminders that saving Grace was not a reward for their good works or that prosperity in this world was not evidence of redemption in the next. Edwards would not have compromised his ideal of disinterested benevolence with the notion of enlightened self-interest that was later proclaimed as the ideal of a growing market economy. As the good feeling of the revival period faded, Edwards attempted to impose greater discipline on his congregation. When he tried to introduce a profession of faith as a requirement for church membership, he met with nearly unanimous opposition. The Christians of Northampton saw Edwards's initiative as an attempt to re-establish a church covenant that was contrary to his grandfather Stoddard's doctrine that membership in full communion should be open to all who had been baptized and were of good reputation.[56]

In 1750, Edwards was dismissed from his Northampton pastorate due to opposition from the neighboring clergy and to his refusal to compromise on questions of church membership. He continued his writing from exile as he ministered to a parish of Christian Indians in the frontier town of Stockbridge. Edwards died in 1758 at age 54 from the

effects of a smallpox vaccination, shortly after becoming President of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University).[57]

Conflicts between Old Lights and New Lights and their successors continued to divide the Congregational Church well into the next century. Many Christian thinkers were simply unable to follow Edwards to his extreme logical conclusion that man was powerless to deal with the question of his own salvation, as he attempted to prove in *The Freedom of the Will*. Carrying the doctrine of predestination to this extreme implied that the Gospel invitation to repent and believe was nothing but a cruel deception. As the Reverend Experience Mayhew put it in his 1744 essay, *Grace Defended*:

> I desire to know what Kindness it is to any Sinner, that he has an Offer of Salvation made to him in the Gospel, if he have no Power given to him to accept of that Offer. What Kindness is it to a Person that he has Tidings of a Saviour, and is promised that he shall be saved by him, on this Condition that he believeth on him, when, this notwithstanding, God never did nor ever will give him any Power to Believe?[58]

Once the Congregational clergy had conceded this point, the way was opened for other Arminian ideas, such as the importance of good works and ethical behavior. As New England's prosperity came to rival that of the mother country, succeeding generations of Yankees found it more and more difficult to accept the idea that they were utterly depraved and incapable of taking any action that might lead to their own salvation. By 1700, men of wealth "would no longer subject themselves to the indignity of a public relation of their sins." For those who had not experienced a New Light conversion, the theology of Edwards and his followers was simply speculative discourse that had no more value than the Old Light variety.[59]

For the town of Newbury, this meant that the New Lights in the new downtown Presbyterian Church remained in the minority. In the western part of Newbury, Pastor Moses Hale of the Second Congregational church negotiated a conservative compromise between the Old Light majority and the New Light dissidents who rejoined the church in 1755. As for the Richardsons, Joseph's older sons, Joseph Jr. and Daniel, and their families remained faithful to the conservative majority in Newbury, whereas Thomas and Caleb, who moved to

Methuen, were drawn to a New Light congregation in the western part of that town. (See Chapter 3.)[60]

By mid-century, however, such theological debate was left mainly to the clergy as ordinary New Englanders turned their attention from spiritual to temporal concerns, namely toward wars and rumors of wars.

Stephen Richardson and the Seven Years War

Daniel Richardson and his siblings had enjoyed a period of relative peace in Massachusetts after Queen Anne's War ended in 1713. Although there was sporadic conflict with the Native Americans thereafter, full-scale war did not break out again until 1744. During King George's War, as it was known in America, the New England colonies raised a colonial army of 4000 men that captured the Fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island after a six-week siege. Major Moses Titcomb and his Massachusetts soldiers, including men from Newbury, distinguished themselves during the campaign.[61]

In Europe, this conflict was known as the War of the Austrian Succession, the name alone showing that the mother country had other global interests that might not coincide with those of its colonies. Sure enough, when the time came to negotiate the peace, England agreed to return Louisbourg to the French in exchange for Madras in India. New Englanders, who had suffered heavy losses during this war, were not at all happy with this exchange. No doubt, they foresaw that they would be obliged to fight again for this strategic site within a few years.

Stephen Richardson, the youngest of Daniel Sr. and Sarah's children, born on August 6, 1737, was approaching manhood in time to serve in the last of the French and Indian Wars. The year 1754 saw the preliminary skirmishes of that conflict that arose over French and English competition for control over the Ohio River Valley. Stephen, then 17 years old, was serving in a Newbury company commanded by Captain Stephen Emery. This company was probably a militia train band since Massachusetts did not begin a systematic levy of troops to go against the French until the following year. Militia training was still obligatory for all young Massachusetts men, although many managed to avoid it, and others did not take it very seriously. The result was that militiamen were seldom ready for combat.[62]

The following year, Stephen Richardson became a Centinel (Private)

in Colonel Moses Titcomb's Regiment, which was part of the Massachusetts Provincial Army. The army's mission was to mount an offensive through the long chain of waterways from the Hudson River to Montreal via Lake Champlain. Although Stephen might have been impressed from the militia, he was probably led to volunteer by the salary, which was equivalent to that being paid to skilled laborers in Newbury. At the end of winter, Titcomb's regiment assembled at the Third Parish Church near the port in Newbury, where they heard the Reverend John Lowell preach a sermon from the text, "For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you." They marched westward to Albany and then turned northward to Fort Edward on the Hudson River, where General Sir William Johnson, commanding the provincial army, had established a supply base. By this time, Colonel Titcomb's regiment had joined others from Massachusetts, New York, and New Hampshire to form a force of at least 1300 militiamen supported by 200 Mohawk Indians.[63]

Once on site, the most urgent task of the American officers was to prepare their raw recruits for combat, especially since their militia service had afforded them little actual drill time. For their very survival, they had to learn techniques for marching and maneuvering in wooded surroundings. Before joining Titcomb's regiment, they probably had very little practice firing their muskets. Militiamen often drilled without firearms, and, contrary to legend, many families did not even possess such an expensive weapon. The Provincial government had ordered 2500 modern muskets from England in January 1755, but some recruits had to make do with a motley collection of weapons from previous wars or their own ancient hunting pieces. Some of them never had the chance to fire a gun before their first battle.[64]

General Johnson's objective was to mount an attack on French strongholds at the southern end of Lake Champlain. On August 28, 1755, he moved northward from Fort Edward, with most of his small army, to establish an advanced base at the southern end of Lake George, a vital link on the route to Montreal. Meanwhile, the French learned of the Americans' preparations and prepared a preemptive attack. The French commander, Jean Erdman, Baron Dieskau, had moved a mixed force of Grenadiers, militia, and Natives behind Johnson's main force and were about to attack his supply base at Fort Edward. Johnson learned of the French presence and, on September 8, sent 1000 men back to reinforce the 500-man garrison at Fort Edward. The French ambushed the

marching column en route, inflicting heavy losses on the Americans and forcing them to beat a rapid retreat to Lake George. Despite their surprise, the Americans withdrew in good order. When they arrived at Lake George, they quickly set about erecting impromptu fortifications. Thus prepared, they were able to hold off the French when they attacked that same afternoon. Johnson's three cannons were used to deadly effect, firing grapeshot to stop the enemy advance. Colonel Titcomb's Regiment held the right wing of Johnson's defensive line in the woods, and Stephen Richardson must have taken part in this battle. Colonel Titcomb himself was killed. Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Bagley took over and retained command of the Regiment until the end of hostilities in North America five years later. Heavy losses, including the mortal wounding of Baron Dieskau, forced the French to abandon their offensive and withdraw to their base on Lake Champlain. Given the unprepared state of the American recruits, it is remarkable that they managed to fight the French and Indians to a tactical draw in their first battle of the war.[65]

To secure their strategic position at the base of Lake George, Johnson decided to construct fortifications near the site of the battle. He put his recruits to work building what became Fort William Henry. Jonathan Bagley was promoted to Colonel and was placed in command of both Fort William Henry and Fort Edward when General Johnson left the scene. The ordinary soldiers who remained with him settled into a routine of work and drill. Young recruits like Stephen Richardson found this routine very hard. One of them later wrote, "Our duty is so hard that our men scarcely have time to cook their victuals or wash their clothes." In addition to their usual work details, the soldiers built fortifications and boats needed for transportation on the Lake. Additionally, much of their time was spent drilling to perfect their infantry skills. The recruits also had reason to complain about the food. The recommended rations were more than generous, but supplies did not always arrive regularly. Thus, the men often had to hunt, fish, or buy extra food from the sutlers who accompanied the troops. Living conditions were crowded; private soldiers slept six in a tent that measured six by seven feet wide and six feet high. The clothing supplied this first year at Lake George gave the small army some appearance of uniformity, but usually had to be supplemented by civilian wear.[66]

Stephen Richardson's first experience of military duty apparently led him not to reenlist in Colonel Bagley's Regiment the following year. This was a fortunate decision because the 1756 campaign in the Lake George

sector turned to disaster for the Anglo-Americans. In that year, a British Regiment arrived at Fort William Henry, and its Colonel, Munro, took command of the forces there, including Bagley's Regiment. In August, a French and Indian army of 8000 under General Montcalm besieged Fort William Henry. The garrison, numbering little more than 2000, held out for a week but surrendered when it became clear they would not receive reinforcements. Montcalm had guaranteed the garrison safe passage back to Fort Edward, but he was unable to control his Indian allies, who attacked the retreating soldiers, killed 200, and took 200 prisoners. Stephen probably did not serve in 1757 either, although the records for Bagley's regiment in that year are incomplete.[67]

In 1757, William Pitt became the virtual head of a government with the Duke of Newcastle as nominal Prime Minister. Pitt initiated a truly global strategy, leading historians to classify the Seven Years' War as the first global war. Pitt's strategy was to keep the French army tied up on the continent by supporting the German states with subsidies and a British Army while projecting British naval power to attack French colonies in Africa, India, the Caribbean, and North America. Pitt's policy of consolidating the Empire led him to send more military resources to North America in order to finish with the French-Canadian threat once and for all. The British Army stationed in the northern colonies brought a significant economic stimulus to the region, which must have led to more work and income for housewrights such as Daniel Richardson.

This growing war effort inevitably drew Stephen Richardson back into military service in the Lake Champlain theatre. In 1758, a British-led force of 16,000 men attempted to seize Fort Carillon (later known as Fort Ticonderoga) at the southern end of Lake Champlain but was defeated due to tactical errors by commanding General James Abercrombie. In July of the following year, another British-led force under Sir Jeffrey Amherst finally seized Fort Carillon. Stephen Richardson participated in the second campaign as a private soldier in Colonel Joseph Gerrish's Massachusetts Regiment. The French at Carillon offered little resistance because most of the garrison had withdrawn to Quebec to reinforce Montcalm's forces facing the siege of the British Army Regulars under General Wolfe.[68]

Stephen reenlisted for the 1760 campaign and served as a Private in Captain Samuel Gerrish's company in Nova Scotia. At that time, the colonial regiments in Canada were serving mainly as garrison troops. A formidable force of 15,000 British Regulars had recaptured the fortress of

Louisbourg in 1758. This cleared the way for the British to sail up the St. Lawrence and begin their three-month siege of Quebec, which fell on September 13, 1759. The small British garrison left at Quebec held out against a French counter-siege until reinforcements arrived the following summer. The fall of Montreal on September 8, 1760, marked the end of fighting in North America and the end of French rule in Canada. Colonial troops were then free to return to their homes and families, although the Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years' War was not signed until February 10, 1763.[69]

It was about time for the North American campaign to end since many Colonial recruits had become completely fed up with their conditions of service as auxiliaries to the British Army.[70]

Among them was Gibson Clough, who wrote:

> So the month spends away and cold weather is coming on apace which will make us to look around about us and put on our Winter Clothing and we shall stand in need of good Liquors for to keep up our Spirits on cold days, and we being here within Stone walls are not likely to get Liquors or Cloathes at this time of ye year and although we be Englishmen Born yet we are debarred Englishmens Liberty therefore we now see what it is to be under Martial Law and to be with ye regulars who are but little better than slaves to their Officers; and when I get out of their power I shall take care how I get in again.[71]

The colonial troops would not soon forget how their homeland compatriots had treated them. Now, however, was the hour of their joyous return.

The Marrying Season

The Richardson family would quickly make up for lost time. When he returned from his last year of service with the British, Stephen was 23, which was generally considered a proper age for young men to marry. For some time, Stephen had his eye on a young lady named Mary Chase, who lived only a few hundred yards away, down the road known today as Chase Street. Perhaps the young couple had exchanged promises before Stephen's last year of service, or perhaps they had only exchanged glances across the aisle in church. In any case, a wedding

date was soon fixed. Neither family would have any reason to object since Stephen's father was now a prosperous housewright and the bride was the great-great-granddaughter of Aquila Chase, a respected early settler of Newbury.[72]

But Stephen and Mary had to be patient and give precedence to their elders. In 1761, Stephen's father, Daniel, then 69 years young, decided to remarry in July. The object of his affection was Lydia Merrick, née Brown, the 46-year-old widow of Joseph Merrick. As was common when widows remarried, a pre-nuptial marriage agreement provided that her late husband's estate would not become part of the new couple's community property. Lydia and Daniel were second cousins, their common ancestor being Thomas Browne, one of the very first settlers of Newbury. There was a further connection through Daniel's brother Caleb, who had bought property in Methuen from Lydia's first husband, Joseph Merrick, in 1752. Daniel probably also had business dealings with Merrick, who was a joiner, one of a corps of craftsmen who frequently worked with housewrights.[73]

On August 18, 1761, it was Stephen and Mary's turn to marry, and thus began a union that would bring many children and a new life full of changes, welcome and unwelcome, which they could never have imagined. And that was not the end of the marrying season for the Richardson-Merrick family; three months later, Daniel's new step-daughter Anne Merrick wed Samuel Gardner. The groom had served in the same company as Stephen during the last two years of the war, and the two became close friends.[74]

Daniel found himself with a new instant family. Lydia's oldest daughter, Sarah, had married a few years before, but there were as many as five Merrick children from 6 to 23 years of age who may have become part of the Richardson household. Perhaps the enlarged family proved too numerous for Daniel's house and land in Newbury; on October 25, 1762, Daniel sold that property to his neighbor, Joseph Brown, and on February 10, 1763, bought 50 acres in Methuen, next to his brother Caleb's property.[75]

Chapter 3
The Losers

The wartime years from 1755 to 1761 had been profitable for Daniel Richardson's carpentry and house-raising business. Newbury residents who profited from the surge in wartime expenditures wanted new and bigger houses, and Daniel was there to serve them with the help of his older sons, Christopher and Daniel Jr. It seems curious that Daniel, at age 70, should decide to leave the community that had treated him so well.

The problem was that land was no longer available at reasonable prices in Newbury. As everyone knew or thought they knew, land ownership was the only reliable basis for prosperity and security. Since the beginning, the wealthiest and most influential people in town had always been those who owned the most and best land. Daniel's brother, Joseph Jr., understood this, and thanks to his profitable weaving business, he was able to buy many acres of land for his children in the new town of Chester, New Hampshire. Daniel's older sons, Christopher and Daniel Jr., also knew this, and since they were well into their 30s, they did not want to wait any longer to set out on their own. In the early days of the colony, the patriarchs of families usually had enough land and authority to induce their sons to wait impatiently for the distribution of their estates. By Daniel's time, however, most patriarchs had less authority and less land. The obvious solution then was to move out in search of more land.[1]

The younger generation was more independent, too. Christopher Richardson and his wife, Anna, moved northward to Raymond, New Hampshire, sometime in the 1760s. Daniel Jr. initially settled near Christopher in Candia, New Hampshire. Since Daniel Sr. had prospered during the wartime economic boom, he probably supported them in purchasing farmlands in anticipation of their inheritance. In any case, during the 1760s, Daniel's two older sons lived about 30 miles from their

father's new home in Methuen. This distance was at least a day's ride on horseback, just enough to assure Christopher and Daniel Jr. of the independence they craved.[2]

Daniel's daughter Sarah, who was deaf, was the only one of his offspring who could not assert her independence. When the rest of the family left Newbury, Daniel presumably made some provision for Sarah, who was then 28 years old, perhaps placing her in the care of another Newbury family as a bonded servant. Unfortunately, the arrangements for Sarah's care broke down, and in 1764, she was warned out of town. "Warning out" did not mean she was expelled from the town; the township was simply serving notice that they would not be legally responsible for her care. Her father must then have taken her back into his household or made new arrangements for her in Methuen.[3]

A New Life in Methuen

Without his two older and experienced sons to work with him, Daniel may no longer have felt able to carry on a housewright's physically demanding work. That may be one reason he decided to pull up stakes and start a new life across the river in Methuen. How adventurous and imprudent this must have seemed to Daniel's friends and neighbors! Nevertheless, there was a certain logic to his decision. Methuen's growing population could provide opportunities for his business to continue in cooperation with his younger brother, Caleb, who was also a carpenter and whose land adjoined Daniel's. Daniel's son Stephen, who accompanied his father, could choose between carpentry and farming. Daniel's 50 acres in Methuen might provide sustenance for his newly extended family, which his limited holdings in Newbury could not. In any case, Daniel's first project was probably building a house on his new property, since his title deed did not mention any buildings.[4]

By 1763, Daniel's brother Caleb Richardson owned more than 100 acres of land in Methuen. He started out in 1730 with 39 acres for which he paid 148 pounds in bills of credit. He married Tiffen (Tryphena) Bodwell, a Methuen girl, in 1736, and they had at least ten children. Their household was only part of an extended Richardson family who had been early settlers in Methuen on the western side of town. Daniel and Caleb's brother Thomas had bought 40 acres between the Merrimack River and the highway in 1722 when Methuen was still part of Haverhill. In 1730, their sister Sarah married Joseph Gutterson, a

farmer who owned land near Thomas. By the time Daniel moved to Methuen, Thomas, and probably Joseph and Sarah had died, but most of their offspring were still working their nearby farms.[5]

Friendly neighbors and kin formed an essential support network for most Massachusetts farmers at this time. Every farm family would eventually need to borrow tools, exchange or hire labor, or perhaps hire a team of oxen. It was standard practice for neighbors to combine their efforts on one another's farms when workloads were heavy. They would also exchange advice based on their experiences with livestock, crops, soils, and methods. Such support would be especially necessary for Daniel and his son Stephen, who had relatively little farming experience.[6]

Before moving to his new land in Methuen, Daniel had not shown much interest in farming but had concentrated on the building trade. Except for some meadow inherited from his father, he had not expanded his land holdings in Newbury. If Daniel hoped to continue his carpentry and house-raising in Methuen, he might have been disappointed because the Massachusetts economy was slow to recover from the post-war recession that began in 1761. Still, he was used to hard work, and even at 70, he could participate in the labor that farm life demanded. Of course, the workload would fall more heavily on his son, Stephen, who was then in his prime at age 25. Lydia and her older children would share the lighter farm work, as would Stephen's wife, Mary, even during her frequent pregnancies. There seemed to be no reason why the Richardsons would not succeed in this venture.

The biggest worry of Massachusetts farmers at this time was the weather. The years from 1750 to 1774 were marked by foul weather and unusual cold; for 13 of these 24 years, the growing season—the number of days between killing frosts—was too short for the corn to mature. Since corn was still the most important staple crop for both people and animals, this cold and uncertain weather meant hard times even for experienced farmers and even more so for newcomers such as Daniel and Stephen. Despite the unfavorable weather, Daniel and Lydia were committed to their new life in Methuen, as evidenced by their transfer of membership from the Second Church in Newbury to the First Church in Methuen on July 3, 1764. Christopher Sergeant was the Old Light pastor in Methuen. In 1744, Sergeant had joined the Reverend Thomas Barnard of Newbury and 16 other ministers in signing a letter to the Boston Association of Ministers protesting the opening of Boston pulpits to

George Whitefield. The First Church was still the only regularly established church in town, but it was far from the west side, where the Richardsons lived.[7]

When Daniel and his family arrived in Methuen, they found that Daniel's Brother, Caleb, was not at all happy with the First Church, and that distance was not the only reason. During a meeting of the First Church on October 2, 1754, Caleb and several other members had been asked to explain why they were missing church services. Caleb replied that he thought the Reverend Sergeant was preaching false doctrines. Several prominent west-siders, including Caleb's father-in-law, presented a petition objecting to Sergeant's preaching and asked that he be removed as pastor. The meeting was then adjourned until October 15, when it reconvened with a neighboring Old Light pastor, the Reverend Joseph Parsons, as moderator. The record of the meeting is difficult to read and interpret, but Caleb, the main spokesman for the group, challenged Sergeant's interpretations of rebirth during conversion and predestination, which appeared more Arminian than Caleb's understanding. The Church apparently decided that the charges against Mr. Sergeant were not serious enough to warrant his dismissal. The members of the Church also voted not to expel the dissenters but advised them that there would be no objection if they wished to join another church. Up to that time, Caleb had all his children baptized in the First Church, but there are no First Church baptismal records for his two sons born in 1756 and 1759.[8]

Still, Caleb and his fellow dissenters were tied to the First Church by their obligation to pay taxes for the minister's support. In 1757, 13 Methuen residents, including Caleb Richardson, petitioned "to see what the Town will do concerning releasing those who are oppressed in paying rates to the minister contrary to the words of God, and the laws of our king." The Town voted to reject their petition. On March 3. In 1762, west-enders petitioned to form a separate Parish, but the Town again rejected their request. On April 9 1766, the Town finally agreed to poll off 62 west-siders, including Caleb, his son Parker, and his nephews Thomas and Francis Richardson. Although the petition lacked detail, it appeared that the 62 persons listed were freed from their obligation to support the Reverend Mr. Sergeant. Residents of the west side, however, had to wait several years before they could have their own church. Francis Richardson waited to have three of his sons baptized in a west-side church, but he finally lost patience in 1769 and had all three

baptized at the First Church on September 28, 1769. The Second Church in Methuen was established by 1772, when the Reverend Eliphaz Chapman was settled as its pastor. In 1791, he left Methuen with his family and took up farming near Bethel, Maine. Chapman named one of his sons after George Whitefield, which is strong evidence that he adhered to the New Light evangelistic current.[9]

It is less evident, however, that all those who seceded from the First Church were New Light in persuasion. Caleb Richardson's case is clear, given his statements recorded in the First Church's records. Others may have joined the Second Church simply because it was closer to home. Since Daniel had remained with the Old Light majority in the Second Church in Newbury, he probably found the Reverend Sergeant's sermons in accordance with his beliefs. Daniel's choice of the First Church, from which his brother, nephews, and neighbors were determined to separate, may have cost him the ill will of other west-side farmers and could have made it difficult for him to integrate the informal workgroups that were so important to farmers at that time.

In any case, Daniel and Stephen made a success of their farm, even though Daniel was probably unable to work after 1768. In that year, Daniel made his will, which suggests that he felt the weight of his advancing years. Nevertheless, the 1771 Tax Evaluation List estimated the value of their annual production at seven pounds, placing them well above the subsistence level. Historians estimate that the average Massachusetts farm family needed at least 20 productive acres to reach nutritional independence. Daniel's farm was able to report 35 acres of land in tillage, pasture, and meadow. Stephen, Mary, and Lydia also took care of two pigs, three cows, ten sheep and goats, and four oxen. One competent farmer alone probably could not efficiently exploit more than 20 acres, so Stephen would surely have needed outside help. An informal labor exchange system with neighbors would help with seasonal peak workloads such as plowing, reaping, and haying, but hired hands were also necessary.[10]

Lydia's three sons, who were 25, 21, and 16 years old in 1771, could have filled the farm's labor deficit. Wherever they were, they were all polls ratable (subject to a head tax), but they were not on the tax list for Methuen. At least, their absence meant fewer mouths for the farm to feed. Lydia's three daughters had also left the dinner table; by 1771 or soon afterward, they were all married. Stephen and Mary had four or five children by 1771, but none were old enough to help much with the

chores. In total, four adults and four or five young children lived on the farm. This was larger than the average farm family but well within the farm's capacity to support.[11]

Despite their apparent success in agriculture, Daniel Richardson and his family gave up farming as their principal occupation. On May 4, 1773, Daniel sold the property, approximately 52 acres with a house and barn, to Jonathan Noyes of Newbury for 160 pounds. In this deed, Daniel still showed his profession as housewright, rather than yeoman or husbandman, which suggests that he may have continued in the carpentry business with Stephen's help. Daniel died before November 17, 1774, when Stephen filed his will in the Middlesex County probate office and declined to act as executor. The file was opened under the name of "Daniel Richardson of Methuen," which is curious because Methuen is in Essex County, whereas Massachusetts law required wills to be filed in the county where the testator last resided. Thus, Daniel's residence during the last year of his life is uncertain. He might have lived with his brother Caleb in Methuen, with his son Stephen in Dracut, Middlesex County, or somewhere else. The residence of Stephen and his family after 1773 is also uncertain, but they were living in Dracut by 1777, when Stephen was a Private in the Train Band and Alarm Company of Eastern Dracut.[12]

Daniel's will has disappeared from the probate docket, and there is no evidence that it was ever probated. Assuming his principal assets were the 160 pounds he received from the sale of his property in Methuen, he might have distributed them before he died. In that case, however, he surely would have destroyed his will. It seems more likely that his heirs distributed his assets after his death. They probably had lively discussions on the subject, but if anyone was dissatisfied, he could have obliged the probate office to deal with the probate file. Daniel's second marriage complicated the distribution of his assets. When Daniel advised the Town Clerk of his intention to marry Lydia, the record shows that Daniel renounced any rights to her first husband's estate. We do not know, however, whether Lydia renounced her dower rights to Daniel's estate. Under Massachusetts law, Lydia would have a lifetime usufruct of one-third of her husband's estate. She may have given up her right to Daniel's estate if she already had sufficient income from her first husband's legacy. Daniel's missing will would probably have mentioned any agreement on dower rights. Daniel and Lydia likely tried to settle this question before his death. It appears that they did reach an agree-

ment; otherwise, Lydia would not have waived her dower rights as she did when Daniel sold his Methuen farm.[13]

Despite the lack of documentary evidence, informed guesses about the fate of Daniel's heirs are still possible. Presumably, his sons, Christopher, Daniel Jr., and Stephen, divided their father's estate equitably among themselves. The two older men, who owned farms near Raymond, New Hampshire, would welcome the additional working capital. Stephen, however, had no property in his own name, and his share was apparently not enough to buy a farm capable of supporting his family. In the 1798 tax list, he stated that he owned a house worth $10.00 and nine acres of land, which the tax Commissioners evaluated at $83.50. Stephen seems to have received little reward for staying by his father's side during his final years. Still, he probably inherited his father's tools, which he could use to establish himself as a carpenter and supplement whatever he could produce on his small plot of land in Dracut. Before he died, Daniel Sr. likely made arrangements for the support of his daughter Sarah, who was deaf. Having passed 40 years with this handicap, she must have found some way to support herself. In any case, she remained in Methuen and died there in 1808 at the age of 75. The year before, the Town had found her to be *non compos mentis* and placed her in the care of a guardian. Daniel's widow, Lydia, has disappeared from the usual public records, but she may have gone to live with one of her married daughters who lived in Methuen and nearby towns.[14]

When he moved his family to Dracut, Stephen was not cutting ties with his kin in Methuen because there was a community of interest between the outskirts of the towns at this time, as the following proposal shows:

> Att (At) a Leagel (Legal) Town in Methuen on Februry 3d 1774 to see if the Town will be pleased to vote that the Great and General Court shall if in their wiSaidom (wisdom) think fit to set off the westerly part of Said Town …in order to join with the easterly of the Town of Dracut to make a Township; so that both the above Said towns may be better accommodated to Att (At)end publick worship.[15]

In 1774, residents of Dracut's east side presented a reciprocal request to merge with Methuen's west side. Nevertheless, the town meetings of

Methuen and Dracut voted to reject this project, and similar requests met the same fate in 1778, 1783, and 1787.[16]

Although the Richardsons' new home in Dracut was not far from their Methuen farm, moving to a new home in a new neighborhood could, then as now, bring about dramatic changes in the lives of each family member. If Stephen and Mary had ever cherished hopes of becoming independent and prosperous farmers, that goal now seemed permanently out of reach. In any case, the events of the next few years must have disrupted any plans they had made.

Did they even have time to worry about the rapidly growing national crisis? Up to 1773, Methuen's town records showed no concern about the injustice of taxation without representation under the Stamp Act or the Townshend Acts. The Reverend Messrs. Sergeant and Chapman probably spoke about these measures and the so-called Boston Massacre of 1768, and the men surely discussed them when gathered in the local tavern. Still, there seemed to be little popular mobilization in rural areas until the Committees of Correspondence were organized throughout Massachusetts in 1773. When the Committees began sending their rousing letters and pamphlets to peaceful country towns such as Methuen and Dracut, local patriots could not fail to sympathize with the popular protest of the Boston Tea Party. Nor could they restrain their anger when Parliament retaliated with the Intolerable Acts that restricted political and civil liberties in Massachusetts and closed the Port of Boston. The last straw for many was the Quebec Act of 1774, which extended Quebec's boundaries to the Ohio River on the South and the Mississippi on the West and guaranteed the free practice of the Roman Catholic faith. This Act not only revived the French Catholic menace in the minds of New Englanders but also seemed to block possibilities for emigration and settlement across the Appalachians. From that point on, events moved inexorably toward revolution.[17]

Towns throughout Massachusetts mobilized to resist the British from 1774 onward. The Committee of Correspondence in Boston, under the direction of Samuel Adams, proved extremely effective in coordinating local efforts throughout the Province. Town meetings in Methuen and Dracut, for example, each voted a series of similar measures at approximately the same dates and often using identical language in the minutes of their meetings:[18]

- August 1774: to share the expenses of delegates to the Continental Congress in September.
- January 1775: to organize local companies of Minutemen.
- January 1775: to provide "… support for the poor of the Town of Charlestown and Boston now under oppressed circumstances, in struggling for the liberties of their country."
- April 1775: to boycott British goods.
- April 1775: to aid families where men were absent in the Continental service, laying siege to British-occupied Boston.[19]

Meanwhile, the rebellious Provincial Congress, meeting in Concord since October 7, 1774, had established an Alarm and Muster network to mobilize local militias in case of a British threat against their provisional government. On April 18, 1775, Paul Revere and others activated that network, which proved its effectiveness early on April 19 by mobilizing about 4000 militiamen, including 126 from Dracut and 156 from Methuen. The British threat consisted of about 700 army Regulars, who exchanged fire with the militia at Lexington and proceeded to Concord, where they conducted a largely fruitless search for arms that the rebels had already moved. Most of the militia arrived too late for the battle, but 400 of them faced off against 100 Regulars at Concord's North Bridge, resulting in casualties on both sides. Nevertheless, the British completed their search and began to march back to Boston. However, their problems were just beginning. Although 1000 men with a cannon joined them at Lexington, increasing numbers of militiamen arrived and harassed the tired British column all the way back to Charlestown. On the morning of April 20, the British in Boston awoke to find themselves surrounded by some 15,000 militiamen, many of whom stayed on for the siege of Boston and the Battle of Bunker Hill. Caleb Richardson's sons, Parker, John, William, and Samuel, and his nephew Francis joined in the march to Concord, but they did not stay on for the siege.[20]

A new nation was about to be born. The Richardsons, who a few years earlier had been united around a family nucleus at Newbury, would soon be scattered over New England in communities profoundly different from the one to which their ancestor, William Richardson, had emigrated.

Revolution and Rebellion

When the Revolutionary War broke out, Mary and Stephen Richardson were expecting their seventh child. It was out of the question for Stephen, then 38 years old, to leave his family and join the Continental Army, especially since his oldest child, Stephen Jr., was only 12. However, Massachusetts law required that all adult males between 15 and 60 enroll in their local militia company. Therefore, Stephen was on the train band and alarm list for the eastern sector of Dracut from 1777 onward. Since British forces never directly threatened Dracut, he never saw combat in the Revolution. By the end of the war, Stephen Jr. would have been old enough to serve in the Continental Army, but since his name does not appear in the war records, his parents were probably able to curb any youthful enthusiasm he may have shown.[21]

The Revolutionary period and the post-war years were difficult for Massachusetts's ordinary folk, and Stephen Richardson's family was no exception. First, there were the wartime scarcities, which obliged the great majority to tighten their belts. At the same time, the shortage of hard money forced the State and Confederal governments to pay soldiers and suppliers with paper money or similar obligations. By 1779, there were nearly $200 million continental dollars in circulation, with nowhere near the government resources to back up that volume. It then took up to $50 continental dollars to buy one Spanish silver dollar. Runaway inflation like that could have imposed an especially harsh burden on laboring men like Stephen.[22]

In November 1776, delegates from some 40 towns in Massachusetts and New Hampshire assembled in Dracut at the home of Joseph Bradley Varnum to discuss what might be done to moderate the prices of necessities, which had already risen to levels they considered to be exorbitant. The Convention resolved to petition the legislatures of both states to take action. In 1777, the Massachusetts General Court passed a law providing for fixed prices on 50 listed commodities, but authorities had to abandon efforts to enforce the regulated prices as markets completely dried up. Inflation was particularly hard on soldiers, who found their paper-money wages had shrunk to a quarter of their face value or less when they returned home and tried to spend them to provide for their families.[23]

In the early years of the Revolutionary War, outlying towns such as Dracut and Methuen did not fare so badly. They were inhabited mainly

by subsistence farmers who worked their lands in a system of informal cooperation among kin and neighbors. The absence of young citizen-soldiers placed a greater strain of work and worry on those they left behind, but many soldiers returned between engagements to resume their peacetime occupations. The older workers who remained at home, such as Steven Richardson and his friend Samuel Gardner, could take up the slack. Since these men received their pay in the form of necessities such as meat, grain, and flour, they were less exposed to shortages and inflation than city dwellers were. As the war dragged on, however, farmers and workers alike felt the pinch of shortages imposed by the Continental Army's requirements: decisions taken by the Methuen Town Meetings give concrete examples of increasing demands made on the towns and their residents:[24]

- April 2, 1778: The Town passed a resolution to treat persons who refuse to take their paper money as enemies of their country and voted to publish the same in the Boston Newspaper.
- May 11, 1778: The town voted their accord for the office of the milite (military) to draw on the Treasurer of the Town of Methuen for the sum of eight hundred dollars to hire soldiers for the Continental Army.
- August 5, 1779: A committee was chosen to fix the prices of necessities according to the Concord Convention of July 1779.
- July 5, 1780: The town voted to pay for corn for the militia by issuing notes.
- October 12, 1780: The Town voted to pay Continental Army men and militiamen in corn.
- February 8, 1781: The town voted to raise 22,762 pounds to purchase the town's portion of beef assessed by the General Court.[25]

The real wages of farm laborers in Massachusetts probably declined during the Revolution. The Massachusetts economy shrank, and laborers usually bore the brunt of such hard times. Stephen Richardson, however, had surely mastered the carpenter’s craft while working with his father and was probably able to establish himself as a carpenter in Dracut. In any case, his carpentry skills should have enabled him to earn more than the average day laborer. He must have inherited his father's

specialized tools that were beyond the means of ordinary workers. There is only slim evidence, however, that Stephen found a way to profit from his supposed skills; on March 14, 1787, the town of Methuen voted to pay Daniel Richardson 5 shillings 6 pence for timber. Daniel was Stephen and Mary's second son, then a teenager; since he was living with his parents, they would expect him to work independently or in the family business to help support the household. With all the other children contributing according to their ability from the age of eight, Stephen and Mary could command a considerable workforce to help them through those difficult years.[26]

If it were possible to estimate the monetary value of Mary Richardson's contribution, we would probably find that it compared favorably with Stephen's. As the oldest of 11 children, she was skilled in homemaking and parenting even before her marriage. She raised nine of her children to maturity (eight of them in good health) in challenging economic conditions, which is evidence of her competence. But ordinary housewives in those days had far more to do than cooking, cleaning, and parenting. Mary's duties probably included building fires, milking the cow or goat, feeding chickens, gathering eggs, baking bread, gardening, brewing beer, and fermenting cider. While living in Methuen, she probably also made butter and cheese, but the family's limited grazing area in Dracut meant they produced little excess milk to conserve. They probably continued raising hogs, and while Stephen may have done the slaughtering, Mary prepared the bacon and salt pork. While Mary and Stephen were living in Methuen, she would have shared these chores with the other women who lived on the farm. In Dracut, she would delegate work to the children as they and she grew older.[27]

Moving and settling into a new neighborhood is never an easy process. Stephen established relationships with employers or clients, but it was up to Mary to build cordial relationships with the neighborhood women. There were no known family members nearby, either from the Chase side or from Stephen's branch of the Richardsons. So both of them were pleased when Stephen's old friend Samuel Gardner and his wife, Anne, settled in eastern Dracut. Their friendship grew to kinship when Stephen Jr. and Susannah Gardner married in the spring of 1786. Neighborhood relationships were essential, not only for social reasons but also for informal exchanges of goods and services. Energetic wives often set up small businesses such as raising poultry, selling garden vegetables and herbs, or even midwifery. Such exchanges could increase

family and neighborhood well-being, even if they did not generate much cash.[28]

Neither the surrender of Cornwallis on October 19, 1781, nor the Treaty of Paris signed on September 3, 1783, meant the end of hardship for ordinary folk in the newly independent United States of America. After the war, the government of Massachusetts, dominated by the merchants and financiers of the coastal cities, decided that wartime obligations had to be repaid in full and in hard money. To this end, the Deputies raised taxes to burdensome levels. Concurrently, the State's traditional British suppliers now demanded payment in specie, that is, gold or silver. Massachusetts importers were thus obliged to demand the same from provincial merchants, who, in turn, had to demand that their farmer clients settle their accounts. This tightening of credit led to a drain of hard money toward the coastal cities, a general inability of farmers and rural craftsmen to pay their bills or taxes, the seizure of their property, and the imprisonment of many honest farmers for debt. These events angered the general population, who perceived their new situation as worse than it was under colonial rule. Former freedom fighters were infuriated that their military pay in warrants or notes could be redeemed only at a discount, whereas the speculators who bought such paper were demanding payment at face value. Among those speculators were Governor James Bowdoin himself and some of his friends and associates in Boston financial circles.[29]

Additionally, the rural population, especially in the West, justifiably felt that their interests were not adequately represented under the State Constitution of 1780. The franchise for State offices was limited to men who owned freehold estates with an annual income of three pounds or other estates worth 60 pounds. This meant that ordinary laborers or craftsmen, such as Stephen Richardson, were not eligible to vote. Property qualifications prevented all but the relatively wealthy from seeking office in the State legislature.[30]

As discontent mounted, scores of rural communities began petitioning the legislature for relief and government reform. The State government, however, ignored their petitions year after year, and the legislature adjourned in August 1786 without addressing their concerns. This last snub proved to be one too many for the hard-put farmers, who organized countywide conventions to decide how to remedy the situation. Since the government had ignored their previous petitions, the delegates chose a method that was sure to draw a response. In

September 1786, bands of "regulators" began to seize State Courthouses in the countryside and block court proceedings.[31]

At these county conventions, the people were protesting against the imprisonment of debtors and the arbitrary exercise of State power. It was not only the poor dirt farmers who protested, but also the gentry among them. The common theme of the protests was a call for reform of the state government. As these protests gathered momentum, the movement became known as Shays's Rebellion after Daniel Shays, one of the leaders.[32]

Farmers in Dracut and Methuen were hard hit by the State taxes and by merchants' peremptory demands that debtors settle their accounts. Both towns sent petitions for the redress of grievances to the Massachusetts legislature, which ignored their petitions and dozens of others. In the Dracut petition, the freeholders and other inhabitants of the town asked that:

- Debtors be allowed to settle their debts in personal or real property since there was so little hard money available in the countryside.
- The judicial system be reformed to reduce the expense of court proceedings, particularly regarding disputes over debts.
- The salaries of government officers be reduced, particularly that of the Governor.
- The General Court (the legislature) be moved out of Boston because the legislators are disproportionately influenced by the interests of Boston residents, because they are distracted from government business by commercial and speculative affairs, and "Because the Expence of the Members is much higher in the town of Boston than it would be in a Country Town."[33]

The citizens of Methuen became so concerned about the situation that they established a Committee of Safety and Correspondence at a town meeting on August 17, 1786. Committee members included a majority of militia officers and veterans of the Revolution, such as Major Samuel Bodwell, Captain James Melloon, Captain Henry Bodwell, and Lieutenant John Richardson (Stephen Richardson's cousin). That same day, Worcester County farmers were holding a convention at Leicester, which Lieutenant Richardson probably attended since the town asked

him to report on the proceedings. The meeting also requested Captain Melloon to attend the upcoming convention of farmers at Concord. That convention turned out to be an especially powerful protest:[34]

> In Middlesex County on September 12, 1786, … discontented families flocked to Concord. The Shattucks, the Kemps, the Bloods, and the Woods of Groton marched in opposition to the debtor court. From Pepperell came the Parkers, Shattucks, Wrights, and Nuttings, and from Shirley came the Longleys, Pratts, and Campbells.[35]

Despite drenching rain, nearly 100 of these Middlesex County "regulators" reached Concord. They were soon reinforced by a similar number from Worcester County, who had blocked the opening of their own court a week before. The local militia refused to defend the judges, who were obliged to give up their attempt to open the Middlesex County Court. Between August and September of 1786, the "Regulators" prevented six county courts from opening in the West, the East, and the Center of Massachusetts.[36]

Faced with the possibility of a full-scale rebellion, Governor Bowdoin and his friends in the Boston establishment began raising a private army to restore order. Since the Governor had no legislative authority or appropriation for such action, the special force was financed by Boston businessmen. Benjamin Lincoln, a competent Revolutionary War General, took command of the army. As Lincoln's army gathered monetary contributions and volunteers, it became obvious that the East Coast establishment was not about to compromise with the dissident farmers. Most towns in eastern Massachusetts then fell in line and made at least symbolic contributions of manpower to Lincoln's army. Dracut sent three companies, which seems an extravagant contribution relative to the town's size.[37]

Methuen, on the other hand, was again split between its east and west sides. Captain Caleb Swan, from a prominent east side family, organized a company that marched to join Lincoln's army at Worcester. At least one veteran soldier from the west side, Captain James Melloon, was reported to have challenged Captain Swan as follows: "You have orders for your men to stand ready. I expect you intend to march your Company in Support of Government. If one man is Called for I Mean to go on the other side, and if I see you there in defense of

Government, you shall be the first man I'll kill. Bowdoin is a Tory! [Senator] Philips is a Tory!" This quotation is from an indictment for sedition brought against Melloon in September 1787, in which he was accused of circulating a letter from Daniel Shays, who allegedly requested him to arouse the people against the government of Massachusetts. He was apparently acquitted because his name appears frequently in the minutes of subsequent Methuen town meetings. Melloon was not the only man in Methuen who sympathized with the rebels. At a town meeting on January 29, 1787, the town refused to send provisions to the company that had marched to Worcester to join Lincoln's army.[38]

The rebels did not intend to submit meekly to Lincoln's army. They rallied around a hard core in the western county of Hampshire with the intention of overthrowing the State government. What they lacked were arms. To even the odds against the Boston army, they decided to seize the United States arsenal at Springfield. Unfortunately for the insurgents, a loyal militia force under General William Shepherd preceded them and deployed cannon to defend the arsenal. Shepherd and his men easily routed a poorly coordinated rebel attack on January 25, 1787. The bulk of the insurgents under Daniel Shays retreated northward to Petersham, where Lincoln's army surprised and routed them. Because heavy snow surrounded the town, Lincoln could confront the rebels with only a small part of his army. Nevertheless, the unprepared rebels offered no resistance but scattered and fled. The deep snow prevented the victors from taking more than a few prisoners.[39]

Boston celebrated General Lincoln's victory as a great triumph. The legislature appropriated 40,000 pounds to carry on the fight and to reimburse the businessmen who had funded the army. Not all the rebels surrendered after Shays's defeat at Petersham, and pockets of resistance persisted in the far west until June 1787. Meanwhile, the legislature passed the Disqualification Act of February 16, 1787, which allowed the pardon of ordinary rebels who surrendered their arms and swore an oath of allegiance to the State. Some 4000 men swore the required oath. According to the law, the oath-takers were to lose the right to vote and other civic privileges for three years. In the April 1787 elections, however, Governor Bowdoin and his supporters were defeated by heavy margins, and the new legislature under Governor John Hancock restored suffrage to those who had taken the oath. Originally, the leaders of the rebellion and those accused of particular crimes were

excluded from the pardons. Only two, however, were hanged, and all the rest were eventually pardoned.[40]

Thomas Jefferson, then ambassador in Paris, seemed sympathetic to the rebels' cause. He wrote to James Madison on December 20, 1787:

> I own I am not a friend to a very energetic government. It is always oppressive. The late rebellion in Massachusetts has given more alarm than I think it should have done. Calculate that one rebellion in 13 states in the course of 11 years, is but one for each state in a century & a half. No country should be so long without one. Nor will any degree of power in the hands of government prevent insurrections.[41]

Madison, however, held a different view of "the late rebellion," as did the conservative elements who held power in most of the other states. In fact, many of these conservatives were vulnerable to agrarian discontent closer to home. They were quite alarmed by the disorder the rebels had caused and were frustrated that the Confederal government seemed powerless to intervene. Thus, Shays's Rebellion helped convince the Founding Fathers that it was urgent to strengthen the central government. On February 21, 1787, the Congress of the Confederation voted to revise the Articles of Confederation, which led to the Constitutional Convention meeting in Philadelphia on May 25, 1787. The delegates completed their work in September of the same year. In Massachusetts, however, on February 6, 1788, the ratifying convention approved the Constitution by the narrowest of margins—187 to 168, with most of the opposition coming from those who had supported Shays's Rebellion.[42]

During the Rebellion, Stephen and Mary Richardson were still living in Dracut with seven or eight of their children. On March 11, 1786, their oldest, Stephen Jr., married Susannah Gardner, daughter of Anne Merrick and Samuel Gardner. Stephen and Mary's oldest daughter, Hannah, usually called Nancy, had married Solomon Austin in 1784 and moved to Sutton, New Hampshire, after 1790. Her brothers Daniel and Edmond would join her later but were probably still living with or near their parents, as were John Barnard, Mary, Sarah, Aquila, and Anne.[43]

Stephen and Mary's third child, John Barnard Richardson, probably participated in—or against—Shays's Rebellion. One of his contemporaries said he had "fit to Shays's Rebellion" when he was 18, but did not say which side he had "fit" for. After the Rebellion, the State amnestied

about 4000 men known to have taken up arms against the government, provided they signed an oath of allegiance. The list of those names has not been reviewed for this book, and John Barnard's name may be among them. On the other hand, the Town of Dracut eventually took sides with the eastern establishment, and John Barnard may have joined one of the three companies that Dracut raised to help put down the rebellion, although his name does not appear in that list.[44]

More Distant Frontiers

After the election of John Hancock as Governor of Massachusetts in 1787, the new administration eased the tax burden mainly by taking less energetic measures to collect delinquent taxes. Economic conditions began to improve as the United States entered a period of prosperity during the last decade of the century. For those at the lower end of the economic scale, such as Stephen Richardson and his family, times were still hard. The Dracut town records for January 19, 1791, show that the Dracut constables warned Stephen and his family to leave the town within 15 days. Stephen's son Stephen Jr., his friend Samuel Gardner, his son-in-law, Solomon Asten (Austin), and their families were subjected to the same indignity. A warning-out was rarely followed by forcible eviction. It was a formality adopted by the town selectmen to avoid responsibility for indigent persons who might settle within the town boundaries. The names of those warned out of Dracut at that time filled nearly three pages in the town records, which suggests that the selectmen were taking extreme measures to avoid expansion of the relief rolls. Although Stephen and his family did not seem to need relief from the community, he must have been indignant at the injustice of the proceedings. For a warning-out to be valid, it would have to be served before the end of the year during which the person(s) concerned had arrived in the community. However, Stephen Richardson had moved to Dracut 16 years before; his established residence in Dracut was proven by his inscription on the militia alarm list during the Revolution. In any case, the warning-out system was no longer adapted to changing social realities. People were moving around much more often than a century earlier, when Massachusetts passed the original warning-out law. Finally waking up to this situation in 1793, lawmakers passed the Settlement Act, which repealed all legal provisions for warning-out of Massachusetts towns.[45]

In any case, Stephen did not leave Dracut. According to the census for Middlesex County, he and Stephen Jr. and their families were still living in Dracut in 1800. The Massachusetts and Maine 1798 Direct Tax Assessments show that they both owned land and houses there—nine acres for Stephen and two acres for Stephen Jr. However, no deeds for Dracut properties have been found in either of their names.[46]

Most of Stephen and Mary's children moved to new frontiers in New Hampshire or western Massachusetts in search of land or work. In 1790, John Barnard Richardson was with his parents in Dracut, but his discovery of the Connecticut River Valley during Shays's Rebellion must have given him visions of opportunities in the West. He returned there after 1790 and apparently plied his trade as an itinerant shoemaker in the Springfield area. This theory would explain how John Barnard came to find a bride from Windsor, Connecticut, about 20 miles down the Connecticut River Valley from Springfield. In 1792, or thereabouts, he married Mabel Wolcott, the daughter of Epaphras Wolcott and his wife, Mabel Burnham. Although he was only an ordinary farmer, Epaphras was from a family that had distinguished itself in the new world through public service. His uncle Oliver Wolcott had signed the Declaration of Independence, and his grandfather, Roger Wolcott, had been the colonial Governor of Connecticut. That Epaphras would consent to his daughter's marriage to a traveling shoemaker seems a testimony to the social fluidity that prevailed along the Connecticut River Valley at that time.[47]

Roger Wolcott's career is also evidence that the social equality and opportunity of that era were more than just an American national myth. He was born in Windsor in 1678, the tenth child of Simon and Martha Wolcott. Simon died when Roger was eight years old, leaving Martha with six young children. He was apprenticed to a weaver at age 12 and had established his own shop by the age of 21. In 1707, he became a Selectman of the town of Windsor, and in 1709 was admitted to the bar. Thus began a gradual ascent up the rungs of political and judicial office until he was elected Deputy Governor of Connecticut in 1741 and simultaneously held the office of Chief Justice of the Connecticut Superior Court. When Governor Law died in office in 1750, Roger Wolcott succeeded him and was reelected Governor until 1754. He also found time to serve as an officer in the Connecticut militia, eventually rising to Major General and Deputy Commander of the New England colonial forces that captured Louisbourg during King George's War in 1754.

What sealed his reputation as a Renaissance man were his literary efforts, including the first volume of poetry published in Connecticut and entitled *Poetical Meditations, Being the Improvement of Some Vacant Hours*, which appeared in 1725.[48]

John Barnard Richardson Settles Down

John Barnard Richardson and his new bride settled first in Wilbraham, Massachusetts, about ten miles east of Springfield. Their first three children were born there: after Chase, who died in infancy, Barnard was born in 1795, and Stephen in 1797. From about 1798 until 1812, they lived in Willimansett, which was then part of Springfield on its northeastern border and is now part of Chicopee. Their next seven children were probably all born in the Willimansett neighborhood of Springfield. Henry Richardson and his twin sister, Harriet, were born on November 28, 1799, followed by Hannah in 1802, John in 1804, William in 1806, Mabel in 1809, and Mary in 1812.[49]

John Barnard probably sought steady work after he married. It was no longer practical for him to spend so much time on the road, with his growing family to look after. He may never have had his own shop as a master shoemaker because the shoe-making trade was becoming a cottage industry. During this early domestic stage, a master shoemaker might accept orders larger than his journeymen employees and apprentices could handle. In such cases, he would pass on part of the orders to skilled workers who would make complete boots or shoes in their homes. John Barnard had the skills and tools necessary for that kind of work, and when working at home, he could supplement his income with small-scale farming. By 1810, this kind of subcontracting was evolving into a system in which the master shoemaker or merchant would distribute pre-cut leather or partial assemblies to craftsmen working in small shops. This organization allowed the workers to specialize in certain operations, such as fitting the uppers or pegging or stitching the uppers to the soles, and thus to work faster and more efficiently. Work in this later stage was obviously more repetitive and less satisfying, and skilled craftsmen such as John Barnard probably resisted the transition.[50]

Meanwhile, Mabel Richardson's older sister, Sarah Wolcott, had married Ebenezer Pomroy of Hockanum, which is about ten miles north of Willimansett and is now part of Hadley, Massachusetts. Ebenezer

married late in life because, according to the terms of his father's will, he inherited his farm on condition that he work to provide a dowry for each of his six sisters. Ebenezer and Sarah had only one child, who died in infancy. Ebenezer did not have the usual large family to help him with the farm's never-ending work, whereas his Richardson in-laws probably had more children than they could easily provide for. So John Barnard and Mabel sent their oldest son, Barnard, to work for his uncle Pomroy as soon as he was old enough to earn his keep. In the Fall of 1812, Barnard fell ill with typhoid fever and died in October of that year. His mother went to Hockanum with her infant daughter, Mary, to care for her son and then brought the dreaded disease back with her to Willimansett, where she and the baby died within a few weeks.[51]

Mabel's death left her husband alone to bring up his seven children, and it was probably not long before the family moved in with the Pomroys at Hockanum. Henry, then 13, and his brother, Stephen, 15, were already old enough to be useful around the farm. Perhaps they accompanied John Barnard on his shoemaking rounds. Stephen, and later John, must have developed a taste for the tradesman's life, but they became merchant tailors. John Barnard continued his work as a shoemaker in Hockanum. As he served the surrounding family farms, he again had direct contact with his clients, which must have been more to his liking than the semi-industrial system developing around Springfield.[52]

> John Barnard Richardson came to end his days … at the farm. He lived in the room at the top of the back stairs with his shoemaker's bench and the tools of his trade. He worked at his trade as much as he could and was quietly helpful in all his ways. [His son] William said, "Father never cost us a cent." And William's wife said, "He never came in the house empty handed; It was always something from the garden, or a few sticks of wood for the fire, or maybe just a handful of chips.[53]

Chapter 4
A Fresh Start

The Second Great Awakening

In 1812 or shortly thereafter, John Barnard Richardson's family settled in with Ebenezer and Sarah Pomroy in the small farming village of Hockanum. Today, this settlement is part of Hadley, about three and one-half miles south of the town center. Hadley is located on the eastern bank of the Connecticut River, just across from Northampton, which had been the pastoral base of the Reverend Jonathan Edwards, the spiritual guide of the First Great Awakening in the Connecticut River Valley. (See Chapter 2.) In the 60-odd years since Edwards left the Valley, two great wars and the turmoil that followed had shunted the people's spiritual concerns to the background. By the turn of the century, prosperity had returned, but the long years during which secular concerns had predominated left many of the Valley towns in the religious doldrums. In short, the Connecticut River Valley was more than ready for the Second Great Awakening, which was already underway thanks to a revitalized corps of Congregational clergy and other Protestant evangelists.

In the Pomroy household,

> Uncle Ebenezer read his Bible regularly every day at family prayers: waded through all of it, chapter by chapter, through all the "begats" and the imprecatory Psalms, through Leviticus and its chapters at which we now flinch and squirm, and through the imagery of Solomon's Song; struggled with the pronunciation as best he could, and when Revelation XXII was finished, wrote on the back leaf, 'October the 28, 1812, then I finished reading my Bible the 18th time", and turned back to Genesis I again.[1]

John Barnard Richardson's children grew up in the old Pomroy

house under what his son Henry later described as "the stern but just rule" of their Aunt Sarah Pomroy. As might be supposed, the Pomroy household was sincerely and profoundly Christian. With such an upbringing, it is not surprising that young Henry became a minister of the Gospel. But it was the Second Great Awakening, which reached its peak during Henry's adolescent years, that enabled him to hear the call to the ministry when it came.[2]

Since Hockanum is part of the town of Hadley, the Pomroy and Richardson families attended the Congregational Church there. When the Richardsons arrived in Hockanum, the Hadley church was undergoing radical changes under the leadership of their dynamic young minister, the Reverend John Woodbridge. Before Woodbridge's ordination in 1810, the Hadley church practiced open communion, as did many neighboring churches. In that part of the Valley, open communion as a converting ordinance had become so entrenched in Congregational practice that, in 1750, when the Reverend Jonathan Edwards tried to impose a simple confession of faith as a prerequisite for membership, he was dismissed from his ministry at Northampton. Sixty years later, the young John Woodbridge was so committed to Edwards's theology that he seemed even more Edwardsean than Edwards. Not only did Woodbridge require a profession of faith, but he insisted that prospective members produce "satisfactory evidence of regeneration and consequent union to Christ." Under Woodbridge's predecessor, the Hadley congregation had settled into a spiritual torpor, from which the young minister did his energetic best to awaken them with heavy doses of Edwardsean theology and its practical applications. The consternation and outright opposition that these changes produced in the community were such that the Hadley church received only 28 new members during the first five years of Woodbridge's pastorate.[3]

Woodbridge, however, was not open to compromise on questions of doctrine, and in 1815, his persistence was rewarded. In December of that year, one of Woodbridge's influential opponents experienced a sudden and unexpected conversion and became Woodbridge's most fervent supporter. The news of his sudden spiritual rebirth spread rapidly through the community, leading many others to reexamine the dispositions of their hearts. The result led to such a massive revival that 158 persons joined the church during the following three months. Woodbridge's nephew and biographer described the results:[4]

> This was one of those effective revivals whose influences flow on refreshing the community for generations. The church was strengthened with graces as well as by numbers. A new life vitalized, a mellower radiance suffused the whole town. As when the sun shines forth after the warm shower-cloud has passed away, and the thirsty earth looks up with a revived and cheered face, so the rain of the Spirit threw over this field of Zion a richer lustre and a fresher verdure.[5]

The town of Hadley had just joined the nationwide current of the Second Great Awakening. At the time of this revival, Henry Richardson had just turned 16, when adolescents are wide open to religious experience if they are inclined in that direction. By this time, he had been exposed to Woodbridge's powerful preaching and cogent teaching for several years. Even if the Pomroy–Richardson household did not make the three-mile trip to church every Sabbath, they must have met with Woodbridge during his regular prayer and lecture meetings in outlying neighborhoods such as Hockanum. Thus, it is likely that Henry participated in Woodbridge's early revivals and experienced his religious conversion under Pastor Woodbridge's guidance. Henry remained sensitive to the value of these recurrent religious revivals throughout his later ministry. Many years later, he wrote to his son Henry about another such movement, which he had perceived spreading throughout the country in the Spring of 1858.[6]

Since the First Great Awakening, the Congregational clergy of New England had divided into three schools of theology. In Boston and its vicinity, the tendency was increasingly Arminian and Unitarian, whereas churches in the center of Massachusetts had remained in the Old Calvinist tradition. In western Massachusetts and Connecticut, many ministers remained faithful to the evangelistic ideals and practices of the New Light movement, which had evolved into the theological current known as the New Divinity, or Hopkinsianism, after its central theologian, Samuel Hopkins. These disciples and followers of Jonathan Edwards were the spearhead of Congregational revivalism in the Second Great Awakening, although the Old Calvinists soon joined the movement.[7]

The Second Great Awakening differed considerably from the First, but its defining essence was still revivalism. In the Connecticut River Valley, revivalists were conservative in expressing signs of their conver-

sion, perhaps because their predecessors had been condemned by Old Light Congregationalists for excessive enthusiasm. This time, the revivals brought forth fewer spontaneous verbal or other physical outbursts. Still, there is no reason to believe that the newly reborn were any less sincere than the New Lights of the previous century. Because the revivals of the Second Great Awakening were relatively dignified among the Congregationalists, they were no longer repellent to the Old Calvinists as the revivals of the previous century had been. In fact, the Old Calvinists were just as motivated as the New Divinity clergy to join the revival movements; both groups felt compelled to react against what they perceived as heretical doctrines preached in Boston area congregations. Not only had Arminianism gained ground in eastern Massachusetts, but now Calvinism also faced the new peril of Unitarianism, which had taken over most of the historic Congregational churches of Boston by 1810.[8]

By 1815, five more States had joined the original 13, and Calvinist denominations such as Congregationalists and Presbyterians had become a shrinking minority nationwide. The Congregationalists were also losing their near monopoly of religious expression in New England, particularly in the frontier areas. New denominations such as Universalists, Methodists, Shakers, and several varieties of Baptists blossomed like wildflowers. All participated in the Awakening and occasionally even organized joint revival meetings.[9]

Nationwide, the Methodists were the most active evangelical denomination during the Second Great Awakening. Their clearly Arminian doctrines of free will and prevenient grace were much easier to preach and understand than the apparent contradictions of Calvinism. Methodist preachers went out as circuit riders to spread the gospel in frontier areas, where Congregational ministers were not eager to settle. Camp meetings were another Methodist innovation. These were essentially revival meetings that lasted for several days of preaching, praying, hymn singing, and calls for repentance and conversion. Even William Richardson, Henry's younger brother, converted to Methodism despite his Puritan heritage, but Henry remained with the Congregational denomination where he had experienced his initial conversion.[10]

Henry Richardson Responds to the Call

Although Henry may have chosen the ministry as his vocation when still a teenager, he did not begin formal preparation until several years later. Perhaps he felt obliged to stay with his family to help his uncle Ebenezer with the farm. His brothers Stephen and John had probably been apprenticed to tailors in a neighboring community and were pursuing their own careers. Financing his education was not the least of his problems. His family would not have been able to cover much of his tuition, board, and room while he was at school. Although he may have been eligible for aid from charitable funds, these could hardly have covered more than a fraction of his needs. Henry must have worked to accumulate a nest egg before he could begin.

The first three decades of the century marked the peak of revivalist activity in New England. During this period, hundreds of earnest young men like Henry underwent a powerful experience of conversion to Christ. Many of them were convinced that they were called to be ministers of the gospel. This was fortunate because there was a large demand for ministers in the newly settled frontiers. Some of these candidates, however, lacked the wherewithal to pursue the long course of theological study that the Congregationalists and Presbyterians required. The directors of colleges and seminaries were fully aware of this problem. In 1815, prominent educators joined with philanthropists to organize the American Education Society to provide scholarships and loans for young men who wished to prepare for the ministry. By 1826, when Henry completed his preparatory studies, the Society had already granted financial assistance to 557 young men. However, the Society's central archives contain no evidence that Henry applied to them for financial aid before 1828. Thus, when Henry entered Bradford Academy (now Bradford College) in 1823 at age 24, he was probably paying his own way. Bradford Academy was founded in 1803 as a coeducational school for the preparation of teachers. He studied there for three years and taught school for three winters to cover his expenses.[11]

Candidates for the ministry in the Congregational church were expected to pursue advanced studies in theology. However, a candidate such as Henry Richardson did not have many choices. Colleges such as Harvard and Yale were beyond his means. Additionally, Henry's religious upbringing and education had likely been conservative up to this point, and it is not certain whether either of these two schools would

have suited his theological views. By 1800, Harvard, founded in 1636 to instruct ministers of the gospel in Puritan orthodoxy, was still the leading college in Massachusetts. Although its orientation was increasingly secular, the college was still an authoritative center for theological learning and continued to be governed by the Boston area clergy and their wealthy parishioners. Since the ministers of the most prestigious Boston churches had become Unitarian by the early 1800s, the remaining Calvinist ministers were gradually losing influence over Harvard. The appointment of the learned Unitarian minister Henry Ware as Professor of Divinity in 1805 and the election of the Unitarian Samuel Webber as President in 1806 confirmed the heterodox nature of theological instruction at Harvard. Although the Unitarians never tried to impose doctrinal conformity over the college, the orthodox Congregationalists—Old Calvinists and New Divinity clergy alike—could not support their loss of control over the college and especially over its theological curriculum. They then organized an orthodox Calvinist school, the Andover Theological Seminary, which opened in 1808. The Andover Seminary was a joint project of prominent Old Calvinist and Hopkinsian clergy and their lay benefactors. By 1826, when Henry graduated from Bradford, the Andover Seminary was well established, and the two founding factions had merged their ideas and efforts to teach what became known as the New England Theology.[12]

After graduating from Bradford Academy, Henry may have applied to the Andover Seminary. If he did, however, he probably would not have been accepted. Andover usually required applicants to have a college diploma, and Bradford Academy was still considered a secondary school rather than a college. The Andover faculty could have waived the college requirement if they judged that Henry was sufficiently prepared for advanced study. However, they had little incentive to consider a waiver because they were receiving applications from more candidates than they could easily accommodate. Although Henry might have gone on to obtain a regular college degree while working intermittently to pay his expenses, he would have been well into his 30s and perhaps drained of his youthful enthusiasm by the time he graduated.[13]

Henry found a program that seemed to fit his situation at the Bangor Theological Seminary in Bangor, Maine. The Bangor Seminary was a charitable institution founded in 1814 in an attempt to meet the Congregational Church's urgent need for ministers to serve Maine's rapidly expanding population. That need became more pressing as the

years passed; in 1821, there were 131 Congregational churches in Maine, but nearly half lacked pastors. Henry enrolled at Bangor in 1826. The Bangor Seminary did not require students preparing for the ministry to pay tuition while pursuing their studies, although payment could subsequently be demanded if they failed to enter the ministry.[14]

Still, Henry had to cover living expenses, and he was running short of funds by the end of 1827. He needed a loan on easy terms so that he could concentrate on his studies without repeated breaks for work to replenish his savings. In January 1828, Henry went to see Elias Cornelius, Secretary of the American Education Society. Henry must have made a favorable impression. Cornelius decided to grant him a loan and had him write a brief but formal request for support:

> Rev. Elias Cornelius
> Secretary of the American Education Society
>
> Rev. and Dear Sir,
> Being desirous to continue my theological studies through a regular course, without interruption, and not being able from my own resources to meet the ordinary expenses of such a course, I would solicit the patronage of the American Education Society.
>
> Respectfully yours,
> Henry Richardson
> Andover, Jan. 4, 1828.[15]

When Henry applied for admission to the Bangor Seminary, he may not have realized that the school was entering a critical period in its history. Indeed, influential members of the Maine clergy had criticized the Seminary, alleging that its program provided inadequate preparation for the ministry. This crisis of confidence led to a decline in financial support and difficulty in attracting competent professors. At their annual meeting in August of 1827, the Trustees addressed these problems by revising the Seminary's curriculum, primarily by lengthening the theology program from two to three years. This brought the program closer to those of established seminaries such as those of Andover, Yale, and Princeton. Entry requirements were also strengthened but remained flexible. Despite pressure to require a college diploma as an entry requirement, the trustees were not ready to abandon the school's earlier

vocation as a pathway to the ministry for older aspirants without diplomas. The trustees ruled in 1827 that "If properly qualified, [students] can enter immediately upon a course of Theological study…" and that an academic committee would decide whether applicants were "properly qualified."[16]

Henry Richardson began his studies at Bangor in 1826 under the original curriculum, which provided for two years of classical studies followed by two years of theological studies. During his first year, Henry studied English, Latin, Greek, Composition, Geography, and Mathematics, subjects to which he had probably been introduced at Bradford Academy. At Bangor, he was expected to acquire the essentials of a lower division college education in a single year. When the 1827-28 school year began, it is doubtful that he continued with classical studies because the school no longer had a professor or even a tutor for those courses. Instead, he probably passed directly into his first year of theological studies. The revised curriculum of 1827 thus placed Henry under a heavier academic load, leaving him less time for part-time work to cover his living expenses. This may explain his need for a loan from the American Education Society in 1828.[17]

The years 1828 to 1830 were extremely difficult for the fledgling school and its students. In 1829, one of the school's two buildings burned down. Some students were already taking board and room with local families, and this catastrophe must have obliged the others to do the same. Not only did students' living conditions worsen, but academic standards must also have declined. In 1827, the school employed two teachers: John Smith, Professor of Systematic Theology and Pastoral Duties, and George Adams, Professor of Biblical Literature and Pastoral Rhetoric. Both were competent in their fields, but Adams resigned in 1829 and was not immediately replaced. That left Smith alone and in ill health to cover the entire curriculum. There were only six students in the 1830 graduating class, probably including Henry Richardson, although Henry may have graduated in 1829. After Professor Smith died in April 1831, the Seminary practically ceased its activities and did not revive until 1832, under the energetic leadership of Professor Enoch Pond.[18]

As for doctrinal orientation, the Bangor Seminary was a conservative institution and so closely aligned with the New England Theology that it was practically a branch of the Andover Seminary. During Henry's four years at Bangor, the curriculum remained solidly Calvinist, of the Hopkinsian variety, as interpreted by Nathaniel Emmons, with whom

Professor Smith had studied. Elsewhere in New England, however, the Second Great Awakening had become a period of rapid evolution, and one can imagine the lively discussions Henry and his fellow students had concerning the new interpretations of Calvinist doctrine being proposed by theologians of the New Divinity.[19]

The Cultural Revolution

Among the leading clergy of the New Divinity were Jonathan Edwards's grandson, Timothy Dwight, who became President of Yale College, and Dwight's students, Lyman Ward Beecher and Nathaniel Taylor. Theologically, the New Divinity clergy adhered to Edwardsean doctrines. Nevertheless, those most active in revival movements would emphasize the necessity for immediate repentance and selfless love for God while minimizing the apparent contradiction between free will and predestination. Nathaniel Taylor went so far toward recognizing the possibility of free will that his ideas were disavowed by the Hopkinsians and the Old Calvinists.[20]

The man who would most disturb the traditional Calvinist clergy, however, was Charles Grandison Finney. The faculty at Bangor probably had nothing to do with Finney except to denounce his ideas. Yet Finney was at the peak of his popularity when Henry Richardson studied at Bangor. These were the years when Finney would lead huge revival meetings in the so-called burned-over district of upstate New York and obtain hundreds of apparent conversions using new and unconventional techniques. Such successes in bringing the masses to Christ could hardly have been ignored by Bangor students or their conservative professors. Finney's doctrinal innovations would lead to further discussions and possibly to indignant protests. Although Finney was nominally a Presbyterian Minister, he had never taken courses at a theological seminary. Instead, he had studied with another minister using the apprenticeship method and reached his own conclusions, which were altogether different from those of the Calvinist hierarchy. First, he affirmed not only the possibility but also the necessity of free will; according to Finney, no one could be saved without showing his or her will to be saved. He also denied the doctrine of original sin and, some years later, came out in favor of the doctrine of Christian perfection.[21]

Sociologist George M. Thomas has examined the elements of conversion theology that were common to most Protestant revivalists during the Second Great Awakening:

> Revivalists varied in their orthodoxy, but the common thread was that they defined the individual as the unit that approaches God and chooses to be saved or not. A central belief was that an emotional, life-changing experience marked salvation and that one maintained religiosity and salvation through continued experiences, inward piety, and right moral behavior. Therefore, while the individual's relation to God was a unique one, it had to conform to the definitions of a true salvation experience and a subsequent moral lifestyle.[22]

This outline has an unmistakable Arminian taint. Nevertheless, it includes generalizations that evolving Calvinists could accept, although their supporting arguments would differ markedly from those advanced by other denominations, notably Methodists. In any case, Calvinist revival theology had changed since the First Great Awakening. In Jonathan Edwards's day, only God could choose whether an individual could be saved, but during the Second Great Awakening, it was the individual who made that choice.[23]

Thomas pursues his discussion by pointing out the interaction between the evolving theology of the Second Great Awakening and the rapidly changing politico-economic environment of the early 19th century. In long-settled States such as Massachusetts and Connecticut, the market economy of the coastal cities had long since spread into the Connecticut River Valley and finally into the interior. Subsistence farming, as practiced by the Richardsons of Methuen, was no longer economically viable, and those who would not or could not adapt became independent laborers or craftsmen, such as Stephen Richardson and his son, John Barnard Richardson. Over the years during which the individual had emerged as the active religious unit, the individual had also become the principal economic unit, and that individual's success depended on his own (and often her own) hard work and competence in dealing with an expanding market. In the frontier areas of the West and North, the individual's personal responsibility for his own success or survival was even more obvious. This parallel evolution was not simple economic deter-

minism but a case of ongoing reciprocal influences between changing theological and economic systems. Theologically, the new evangelical synthesis was moving toward frank abandonment of Old Calvinism.[24]

The Second Great Awakening also provided the context for many religiously inspired social reform movements in New England and throughout the United States. This applied to nearly all Protestant denominations, ranging from the Methodists to the Congregationalists, the former impelled by the conviction that personal salvation always implies Christian mission and service, and the latter by the attempt to put Jonathan Edwards's ideal of disinterested benevolence into practice. This led to a multitude of new inter-denominational and intra-denominational, evangelistic organizations such as societies for the promotion of missionary work, Sunday schools, and the distribution of Bibles and religious tracts. Similar organizations also directed their energies toward social reform and civic causes such as temperance, poor relief, prison reform, and special education and care for the blind, the deaf, and other disabled persons. Although prominent evangelists, such as Lyman Ward Beecher and Charles Grandison Finney, concentrated their efforts on revivalism, they both emphasized the necessity of social reform as an essential Christian concern. Of all the reform movements launched during this fertile period, the one that would incite the most profound and divisive changes in the nation was the anti-slavery crusade, and among the most dedicated of these crusaders was the man who was to become Henry Richardson's father-in-law.[25]

The Reverend David Thurston and the Anti-Slavery Movement

In 1873, John Greenleaf Whittier wrote:

> Of the sixty-three signers of the Anti-Slavery Declaration at the Philadelphia Convention in 1833, probably not more than eight or ten are now living.
>
> As clouds that rake the mountain summits,
> As waves that know no guiding hand,
> So swift has brother followed brother
> From sunshine to the sunless land.

> Yet it is a noteworthy fact that the oldest member of that convention, David Thurston, D.D. of Maine, lived to see the slaves emancipated, and to mingle his voice of thanksgiving with the bells that rang in the day of universal freedom.[26]

Not only was Thurston the oldest delegate to this founding convention, but he was also the first to stand up and sign the Society's *Declaration of Sentiments*. William Lloyd Garrison was the principal author of this declaration, but the text had been read before the delegates and thoroughly discussed so that all the signatories were fully aware of the commitments they were making:[27]

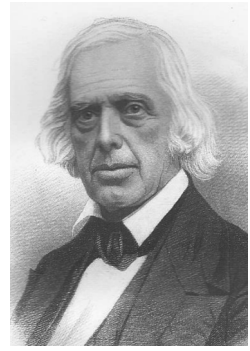
> With entire confidence in the overruling justice of God, we plant ourselves upon the Declaration of our Independence and the truths of divine revelation as upon the Everlasting Rock.
>
> We shall organize Anti-Slavery Societies, if possible, in every city, town and village, in our land.
>
> We shall send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty, and rebuke.
>
> We shall circulate, unsparingly and extensively, anti-slavery tracts and periodicals.
>
> We shall enlist the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb.
>
> We shall aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery.
>
> We shall encourage the labor of freemen rather than that of slaves, by giving a preference to their productions; and
>
> We shall spare no exertions no means to bring the whole nation to speedy repentance.
>
> Our trust for victory is solely in GOD.[28]

That a small-town minister from Maine, such as David Thurston, should become such a fervent abolitionist seems surprising. In 1833, there was little reason for any white resident of Maine even to be aware of the plight of Black Americans. After all, slavery had been abolished in Maine in 1783, and in 1830, there were fewer than 1200 free Blacks in the entire State (less than 0.3% of the total population). Moreover, Blacks were concentrated in the coastal towns, and there were probably none living in Winthrop. Thurston was already busy enough with his pastoral

duties and related activities. As Pastor of the Winthrop Congregational Church since 1807, he built a reputation for ready availability to all his parishioners, whether their need was for compassionate or stern guidance or simple conversation.[29]

In addition to fulfilling his pastoral duties, he was active in local groups such as the Winthrop Society for the Promotion of Good Morals, which was essentially part of the temperance movement. Due to their efforts and those of successor organizations in Winthrop and throughout the State, Maine became the first State in the Union to enact an enforceable prohibition law in 1851. He also supported higher education as a member of the Board of Overseers of Bowdoin College, as a Trustee of Bangor Theological Seminary, and President of the Maine Branch of the American Education Society. He declined an offer to become a Professor of Theology at Bangor because he would have had to give up his pastorate in Winthrop. His peers among Congregational ministers and educators considered his theological views sound, although he had not attended either of the seminaries at Harvard or Yale. He graduated from Dartmouth College and pursued post-graduate studies with the respected minister and theologian, Asa Burton of Thetford, Vermont. Once he was well established in his pastorate, he continued this "apprenticeship" tradition by guiding young ministers' post-graduate studies from his home in Winthrop. In 1853, Dartmouth College awarded him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.[30]

The Reverend David Thurston's agenda was full when the first American Anti-Slavery Society convention met in December 1833. Yet, from that time onward, his commitment to the anti-slavery cause took second place only to his pastoral duties. Thurston's commitment resulted from mature reflection and probably grew slowly over time. He had been convinced of the evils of slavery from the beginning of his theological studies.



David Thurston, about 1850

When he first decided to prepare for the ministry, he was profoundly influenced by reading the sermons of the Reverend Nathanael Emmons. He had initially planned to study with him after graduating from Dartmouth. Emmons was not only a respected theologian and teacher but also an early and outspoken opponent of slavery. As historian David Brion

Davis has observed, "…the source of New England's militant abolitionism can unmistakably be traced to the Calvinist followers of Jonathan Edwards…. At the center of this group stood Nathaniel Emmons, Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins, Levi Hart, and Jonathan Edwards Jr."[31]

In May 1831, David Thurston went to Philadelphia as a Congregational delegate to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the USA. The Second Great Awakening had led to closer cooperation between the two churches. During the 1830s, the Presbyterians treated the Congregational Churches as "corresponding bodies" entitled to representation at their General Assembly. Thurston knew there were serious issues within the Presbyterian Church and that any action the Assembly took on these issues might also affect the Congregationalists. This is probably why Thurston attended the meeting and secured a membership on the Committee of Bills and Overtures that would control the agenda. As a relative outsider, Thurston could hardly take any initiative at the Assembly. Still, he might be in a position to head off any action contrary to the interests of the Congregationalists.[32]

In any case, he was evidently held in respect by the assembled delegates.

> [A]t a stormy session…in the midst of great tumult and excitement, the moderator called upon the Delegate from Maine to pray. The report says of the effect of his prayer upon the Assembly, "It was as if the Master had said 'Peace, be still' and there was a great calm."[33]

One of those stormy sessions was probably about the Plan of Union. In 1801, the two denominations had agreed on a Plan for cooperation in organizing new churches on the western frontiers. Rather than competing for members in sparsely settled areas, they would gather Congregationalists and Presbyterians in a single church. To resolve their differences in church governance, the Plan offered several formulas the churches could choose to organize themselves internally and maintain relations with their hierarchies. This arrangement was working well, but many Presbyterians believed that the Plan of Union was responsible for several dissensions growing in their Church. At the organizational level, the nearly complete independence of Congregational Churches had created confusion in the rigid Presbyterian hierarchy, particularly in the

Synods of Ohio's Western Reserve, where the two churches were the most thoroughly integrated. David Thurston may have been relieved that the Assembly took no important decision on these matters at this session.[34]

A more serious issue was Old School Presbyterians' belief that liberal innovations in theology, such as those propounded by Nathaniel Taylor at Yale, were corrupting the Presbyterian Church. Emblematic of this issue was the trial for heresy of the Reverend Albert Barnes, Minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia. Barnes had stated in his most controversial sermon, "The Way of Salvation:"

> Christianity does not charge on men crimes for which they are not guilty. It does not say, as I suppose, that the sinner is held to be personally answerable for the transgressions of Adam, or of any other man; or that God has given a law which man has no power to obey. Such a charge, and such a requirement, would be most clearly unjust. The law requiring love to God, supreme and unqualified, and love to man, is supposed to be equitable; fully within the reach of every mortal, if there was first a willing mind.[35]

The Old School could not accept Barnes's apparent denial of Westminster Assembly doctrines of original sin and predestination, and both his Presbytery and Synod had found him guilty. Barnes appealed this verdict to the General Assembly of 1831, which overturned Barnes's conviction but warned him to be more careful of his language.[36]

Although David Thurston was probably not comfortable with Barnes's views on predestination, he would have agreed entirely with Barnes on the question of slavery, which happened to be another area of disagreement within the Presbyterian Church. Barnes was clearly an abolitionist, although his first book on the subject, *An Inquiry into the Scriptural Views of Slavery*, would not appear until 1846. During the 1831 Assembly, however, there was little formal discussion of the slavery question, except for approval of a resolution supporting the work of the American Colonization Society, an organization that was about to become controversial.[37]

It was perhaps a coincidence that the General Assembly's adjournment day, Monday, June 6, 1831, was also the opening day of the First Annual Convention of People of Color in Philadelphia. Since David

Thurston had not yet joined the anti-slavery movement, it is unlikely that he had any connection with this Convention. Nevertheless, three of his future abolitionist associates had received invitations to the Convention: Arthur Tappan, William Lloyd Garrison, and Simeon S. Jocelyn. It is interesting to note that Arthur Tappan was a first cousin of the Reverend Benjamin Tappan of Augusta, Maine, who was also a close friend of Thurston's. It is tempting to speculate that Thurston may have met with Arthur Tappan in Philadelphia and, through him, become acquainted with the nascent abolitionist movement and even with members of Philadelphia's important Black Christian community.[38]

Deacon Ebenezer Dole of Hallowell, Maine, was one early Maine abolitionist who helped enlist Thurston in the abolitionist cause. Dole was a devout Christian and generous philanthropist who had made contributions to the anti-slavery efforts of William Lloyd Garrison even before the latter founded his abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. After Garrison organized the New England Anti-Slavery Society in January 1832, he made sure that Dole was named one of several Vice Presidents in recognition of his ability to raise funds.[39]

On June 29, 1832, Garrison wrote to Dole:

> I have forwarded to you, this morning, by the steam-boat, 25 copies of my "Thoughts on African Colonization," which I wish you to distribute gratuitously among your friends, (particularly clergymen) who may most need the information it contains, and whom it is most important to convert. These copies absorb but a small part of the money which you have so generously, at various times, given to myself and my partner to promote the cause of bleeding humanity. You shall have as many additional copies to distribute as you desire.[40]

Dole and many other friends and agents of Garrison would receive copies of this small book, which bore the full title, *Thoughts on African Colonization: An Impartial Exhibition of the Doctrines, Principles and Purposes of the American Colonization Society together with the Resolutions, Addresses and Remonstrances of the Free People of Color*. The book was a thorough and systematic denunciation of the organization known as the American Colonization Society and its program for the expatriation of free Blacks to a colony in Africa, but it was far more than that. "Garrison intended to make his *Thoughts* into 'a textbook for abolitionists,' and he

succeeded." Garrison's book "captured the attention of the humanitarian public with a force unmatched in American journalism since Tom Paine's *Common Sense*."[41]

Dole surely passed at least one copy of this book to David Thurston in Winthrop, which is only a short distance from Hallowell. Dole founded the Hallowell chapter of the New England Anti-Slavery Society on November 18, 1833. The following Sunday in the Winthrop Church, Thurston preached his first sermon on the sin of slavery and the duty of immediate emancipation.[42]

Meanwhile, Garrison had enlisted two other Christian philanthropists, Arthur and Lewis Tappan of New York City, who soon became prime movers in the anti-slavery cause. Despite local resistance to abolitionism, they organized the New York Anti-Slavery Society and persisted even after a mob broke up the inaugural meeting and forced the participants to flee. Once the New York Society was established, the Tappan brothers began to prepare for the founding convention of the American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) in December. In this connection, they must have contacted their first cousin, the Reverend Benjamin Tappan of Augusta, Maine, who was also David Thurston's close friend. Dole's and Tappan's opinions, as well as Garrison's writings, were among the influences that led Thurston to take an active role in the anti-slavery movement. Even so, he would not commit himself to a cause without scriptural guidance and abundant personal prayer and reflection. He finally decided to attend the AASS convention, which began on December 3, 1833, in Philadelphia. After that, he never turned back.[43]

During the Convention, David Thurston took on a surprisingly active role for a small-town clergyman. He was elected a Manager for the State of Maine and Chairman of the commission to draft the Society's constitution. He was also named to the committee to draft the *Declaration of Sentiments* of the Society, although Garrison actually wrote that document. Thurston appears to have inspired the confidence of the two main currents of the Society: his maturity and Calvinist orthodoxy reassured the more conservative delegates, and his commitment's purity and uncompromising nature were consistent with the more radical ideas of Garrison's current. In any case, this Convention was the beginning of a long relationship between Thurston and the Tappan brothers.[44]

In their *Declaration of Sentiments*, the founders of the American Anti-Slavery Society had pledged to establish anti-slavery societies throughout the land, and David Thurston did his part in Maine. The

Winthrop Anti-Slavery Society was established on March 4, 1834, and counted 107 members. On October 15, 1834, in Augusta, Thurston chaired a meeting of nearly 200 delegates, who met to found the Maine Anti-Slavery Society. By the end of May 1835, agents of the AASS had established nearly 200 local auxiliary associations in the northern states. Similar efforts in the South met with hostility and even violence.[45]

The delegates to the national convention had also pledged to "aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery." Christian abolitionists would soon begin to provoke controversy by raising this issue in churches throughout the North. In Winthrop, Maine, where no one had much interest in preserving the institution of slavery, the Congregational Church, on August 20, 1835, adopted the principle that slaveholding was a disciplinable offense in a Christian church. However, few other churches hurried to follow Winthrop's example; at that time, nearly every church in Portland, Maine, refused to receive anti-slavery lecturers. Congregational churches in Connecticut took a similar stand through their General Association. Nationwide, "The lack of enthusiasm for anti-slavery advocacy by the majority of America's clergy was one of the greatest disappointments to abolitionists."[46]

Meanwhile, Lewis Tappan and his assistants at the Society's New York headquarters began printing a veritable deluge of tracts and periodicals, which they mailed out all over the country and which their new army of local societies handed out to their friends and neighbors. In 1835 alone, the national organization distributed over a million tracts, pamphlets, and periodicals. Unfortunately, this extraordinary flow of propaganda produced a backlash that was much stronger than expected. Not only did President Jackson and other national leaders denounce the "unconstitutional" and "wicked" activities of anti-slavery groups, but opponents of abolitionism—mostly "gentlemen of property and standing"—organized mobs who directed their violence against anti-slavery militants in numerous cities of the North.[47]

By the end of 1835, it had become evident that the mailing campaign was not achieving the expected results. Nevertheless, the number of local auxiliary societies increased to 527 in 1836, thanks mainly to the Society's program of speaking tours carried out by its agents. One agent who made an outstanding contribution was the young abolitionist and sometime theological student Theodore Dwight Weld. Weld was a convincing and inspiring speaker and unflappable when facing unruly and hostile gatherings. He was also highly effective in recruiting and

training other evangelists for the anti-slavery cause. The success of the Society's agents convinced the AASS leadership to expand their efforts to place full-time agents in the field. By the autumn of 1836, the Society had recruited a promising group of enthusiasts and called them together in New York City for a three-week intensive training course under the leadership of Theodore Dwight Weld.[48]

Among the participants in the course was David Thurston of Maine, whose parishioners had agreed to allow him a year's leave of absence to work as a full-time agent for the Society. Thurston must have stood out in this class because, at 58, he was the oldest of the trainees. Even with his 30 years of experience in the pulpit, David Thurston still had something to learn from Weld.[49]

His brother Stephen Thurston described his speaking style:

> As a preacher he could not be ranked among the popular, fascinating class. He was not what in modern parlance is termed a sensational preacher. Neither his intellectual type nor his moral tastes were adapted to this style of preaching…. His manners in the pulpit were characterized by simplicity, solemnity, earnestness, and an affectionate persuasiveness. He was utterly unpretentious. He stood erect in the calm simplicity of one charged with a message from God to immortal men, soon to enter upon their eternal retribution.[50]

In the pulpit, Thurston spoke to the converted, or at least to the sympathetic. When speaking to the doubtful or the actively hostile, however, he may have found a bit of sensationalism to be necessary. Among Weld's trainees, there were several abolitionists of southern origin, and Weld encouraged them to recount incidents of cruelty to slaves and to describe the inhuman moral and physical conditions of their lives. Thurston was surely able to draw on these real-life experiences. His grandson later wrote, “I have seen his eyes fill with tears and heard his voice tremble with emotion when pleading for the enslaved or praying for the afflicted.”[51]

Weld insisted that his trainees must convince their audiences that slavery was a sin. He also urged them to create a revival-like spirit among their listeners, "an abiding inwrought, thoroughly intelligent feeling" that would elicit such heartfelt empathy for the slave that they would "leap into our ranks because they cannot keep themselves out."

Otherwise, there is little record of what went on in the training sessions. There were essential tactics and maneuvers to pass on, such as how to face down a hostile crowd and how to recruit and establish a new local anti-slavery society. This latter technique was certainly one that Thurston used to advantage; generally, he would lecture in the same town for several successive evenings until word of mouth had spread his message to all those interested and until he had found a core of the converted who would keep the activity going. By July 1838, when Thurston finished his term as a full-time agent, he reported 54 lectures in seven counties, besides attendance at many other meetings. "He had devoted a year to arduous, self-denying, earnest labor all over the state.… He disregarded the reproach, hostility, mobs that must be met, and hazarded his long, happy pastorate of thirty years."[52]

Then, in 1839, just as the abolitionists reached the peak of their success, the American Anti-Slavery Society began to come apart. The more radical, perfectionist members stayed with Garrison in the AASS, and the conservatives left with the Tappan brothers to form a new group called the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. The immediate pretext for the conservatives' departure was their objection to full participation by women in the activities of the national organization. Probably more important, however, were Garrison's increasingly radical religious pronouncements, which raised fundamental theological objections among the more conservative clerical and lay leaders of the Society.[53]

Garrison's biographer, Henry Mayer, goes to the heart of the matter:

> Garrison's iconoclasm had brought him to the verge of what Protestant theology condemned as the antinomian heresy, a belief that the workings of the indwelling spirit could place a Christian beyond the need for the moral law. [This was]…the challenge posed by the dissenter, Anne Hutchinson, to the Puritan divines of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In the religious upheavals of the 1820s and 1830s, an antinomian tendency grew directly out of the Finneyite revival and called itself “perfectionism.”[54]

Garrison's perfectionism led him to carry moral precepts to their extreme logical conclusions. For example, the AASS had rejected the use of violence to obtain the liberation of enslaved people, but Garrison pushed the doctrine of non-violence to the extreme of non-resistance; that is, he would "turn the other cheek" and refuse to use violence even

to resist wrongful aggression. He demonstrated his adherence to this doctrine at the height of the Boston anti-abolition riots, when mobsters seized and led him briefly through the streets with a rope around his waist. Fortunately, the Mayor came to the rescue and jailed him for his safety. Garrison was also impatient with those who refused to strive toward perfection. For example, the members of the Society had agreed to "aim at a purification of the churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery." This would imply that members should work from within when a church refused to align itself with the anti-slavery movement, but Garrison and his disciples maintained that it was a Christian's duty to secede from such a corrupt institution. This doctrine came to be known as "Come-Outerism." He applied this principle not only to churches but also to political institutions by refusing to support any political party or even to vote in elections.[55]

Although Garrison remained on the radical fringe of abolitionism, he did not try to impose any of his more radical ideas as a policy of the Society or as personal obligations of its members. Nevertheless, he frequently published controversial opinions on religious questions in *The Liberator*, which many wrongly believed to be an official organ of the Society. Garrison's free-wheeling self-expression antagonized not only the Society's conservative membership but also alienated many who might otherwise have adhered to the anti-slavery cause. In short, for many sincere Christians, Garrison's idea of the perfect had become the enemy of the good.[56]

Although the Reverend David Thurston sympathized with certain of Garrison's ideas, there was no way that this Calvinist could accept the idea that man, through his own efforts, could approach perfection. Many years later, he would write to one of his friends and colleagues: "I always fear when too much is ascribed to men in the matter of salvation, and too little to God." Thus, there was no question but that Thurston would remain loyal to the faction led by the Tappan brothers. Indeed, Thurston was prominent enough at the founding assembly that the new society chose him as one of their Vice Presidents.[57]

In 1840, the anti-slavery militants further dispersed their efforts when some of the Tappans' supporters, led by James G. Birney, moved the struggle to the national political scene by forming the Liberty Party. Linking the anti-slavery movement to a political party was an initiative that Garrison adamantly opposed and that Lewis Tappan was not yet willing to support. Thurston, as usual, took a reasonable approach,

consistently exercising his right and duty to vote but never mixing religion with politics by working with any political party.[58]

Although this dispersion of effort may have weakened the national anti-slavery movement, the results were not as harmful as one might suppose. Fortunately, there was very little acrimony among the various factions since they disagreed mainly on strategy but continued to work toward the same goals. For example, all factions rallied behind the cause of the *Amistad* mutineers, the shipload of slaves who mutinied, but found themselves imprisoned in New Haven, Connecticut, from 1839 to 1841. Garrison was not stingy with praise and encouragement for Lewis Tappan, who lavished time and effort to support the mutineers.[59]

Through 16 years of unified effort, the American Anti-Slavery Society had raised public consciousness about the evils of slavery and established a network of nearly 1350 local chapters and seven State societies. Contributions from about 200,000 members had easily financed expenses for publishing, printing, and agents' salaries. The split, however, deprived the AASS of the organizational and fund-raising capacities of the Tappan brothers' team. The economic depression of 1837 also reduced income from contributions, which hurt both societies. Although Garrison and his supporters won control of the AASS in 1840, they found themselves with an empty treasury and a declining membership, a trend they were unable to reverse. For the next 20 years, local societies continued their anti-slavery campaigns without much help from the AASS. The American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society never became a significant agent in the abolitionist movement but confined itself mainly to publishing tracts and ceased activity before the Civil War.[60]

Despite the decline of the AASS, Providence kept the slavery question constantly at the forefront of public attention for the next two decades. Lewis Tappan first turned his reforming energy to the cause of freeing the mutineers of the infamous slave ship *Amistad*. In 1839, Tappan, with fellow abolitionists Simeon Jocelyn and Joshua Leavitt, formed the Amistad Committee to raise funds for the legal and living expenses of the mutineers. In 1841, after their cause emerged victorious before the Supreme Court and their return to Africa had been assured, Tappan and his associates turned their attention again toward the broader abolitionist cause.[61]

By 1846, it was clear that existing organizations, such as the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, were no longer effective in mobilizing anti-slavery sentiment. On September 3, 1846, Lewis Tappan

and his friends took their movement in a new direction by founding a group that would be evangelical as well as abolitionist. This new group, the American Missionary Association, was essentially a merger of the Amistad Committee and the Union Missionary Society, a predominantly Black group inspired by the Amistad affair to promote missionary activities in Africa. The AMA, however, would promote both domestic and foreign missions. In addition to their missionary activities, they worked to persuade existing Protestant congregations and missionary organizations to take clear abolitionist stands. The Association promoted the establishment of abolitionist churches, especially in the frontier areas of the North, where the population was growing rapidly. At the Association's peak, AMA churches counted some 20,000 members. During the pre-war era, this astounding growth was centralized under the direction of Lewis Tappan and a minuscule paid staff. The full-time staff could also count on the assistance of unpaid honorary officers. These officers were chosen for their fund-raising abilities and devotion to the anti-slavery cause. Among them was David Thurston, who was one of the earliest Vice Presidents of the AMA and who, in 1859, was elected President of the Association, a position he held until he died in 1865.[62]

The repercussions of the Amistad affair had hardly died down when the Texas question arose. In 1846, the United States annexed the Republic of Texas as a slave State, just as the abolitionists had feared ever since American immigrants organized the Texas Republic ten years before. This led to the Mexican War, which the abolitionists generally opposed not only on anti-slavery grounds but also because many of them were pacifists. After the war and much debate, Congress passed the Compromise of 1850, which admitted California as a free State and New Mexico and Utah as territories, where their free or slave status was left open to "popular sovereignty" on their admission to statehood. Congress reached this agreement by conceding to the South a new and stronger Fugitive Slave Act, which enraged abolitionists throughout the North and particularly in New England. The act was widely unpopular in the North because it required even ordinary citizens to assist in the capture of fugitives and offered no protection for any Black accused of being a runaway.

A decisive moment in the legislative battle for the Compromise of 1850 was Senator Daniel Webster's Seventh of March Speech, which many in New England would characterize as treason. As one of the

leading figures in the Whig Party, Webster had consistently defended Northern interests, particularly those of the rich and powerful. In this speech, however, he came out strongly in favor of the Compromise, including the new Fugitive Slave Act, justifying his stand as necessary to save the Union from secession and civil war. In 1848, those Whigs opposed to slavery had separated from the Whig Party majority and joined with the Liberty Party to form the Free Soil Party. From 1850 onward, the Whig decline accelerated until the party practically disappeared in New England after the 1852 elections. One of the factors that hastened this decline was Whig support for the Fugitive Slave Act, particularly Daniel Webster's Seventh of March speech.[63]

Abolitionist organizations were the most forthright in their denunciation of the Fugitive Slave Act, which exacerbated the growing differences between abolitionist and non-abolitionist clergy. At the annual meeting of the American Missionary Association, in September 1850, the delegates adopted the following resolution:

> Resolved, that we believe the Christianity of the nation is about to be tested, in view of the late act of Congress for the recovery of fugitive slaves, which appears equally at variance with the principles of the Association, the Constitution of the country, and the law of God, and that as Christians we do solemnly covenant with each other and our colored brethren that we cannot obey it, nor any law that contravenes the higher law of our Maker, whatever persecution or penalty we may be called to suffer.[64]

As a Vice President of the AMA, Reverend David Thurston supported this resolution. Unfortunately, the Association's call for civil disobedience came at a time when Thurston was already facing dissatisfaction from his congregation over his work in the anti-slavery crusade. On January 25, 1850, he wrote to a colleague:

> You know something how my Whig parishioners felt on my espousing the cause of the slave. They have never forgiven me. A leaven has been operating to produce dissatisfaction with me ever since. Then the crime of having lived threescore years and ten is … becoming, in the view of many, quite unpardonable in a minister…. My friends have not always taken the most judicious course, nor would I say that I have always done it myself.[65]

Thurston's Whig parishioners must have become even more dissatisfied when Thurston announced to his congregation that he would not obey the Fugitive Slave Law. Nevertheless, he would not hesitate to justify his position before his congregation, even though the leading Congregational theologians of the day, Leonard Woods of the Andover Seminary and Nathaniel Taylor of Yale, had taken an opposite stand.[66]

There had been rumblings of dissatisfaction within his Congregation as early as October 1849, when he told his daughter and son-in-law how he responded to their concerns:

> I tell them that if those desiring a change are actuated by a conviction and desire that God may be more honored, and the kingdom of Christ better promoted, they may expect the divine blessing; but if actuated by motives of worldly policy, God will frown upon them, ultimately. But the better part of the ch[urc]h have no belief that the movers in this matter have any regard for the honor of God or the good of the kingdom of Christ. Thus I have told you about all I know in relation to the movement here for another minister.[67]

Despite the "leaven…operating to produce dissatisfaction" within the congregation, Thurston did not reduce his commitment to the anti-slavery cause. Indeed, he went to Boston to deliver a rousing welcome sermon to delegates to the Third Annual Meeting of the American Missionary Association on September 25, 1849. As opposition within his church continued to grow, it seemed as if he was resigned to let Providence pursue its course. In the spring of 1850, he even considered leasing the family home in Winthrop. Rather than staying close to his pulpit at this critical moment, he left Winthrop in the summer of 1850 to attend the World Peace Conference in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, as a delegate of the American Peace Society. He extended his stay abroad for a four-month tour of Europe, including England and Scotland.[68]

By May 1851, those in the congregation who were pro-Thurston or anti-Thurston had finally agreed that they had to look for a new minister. Thurston himself seemed reconciled to losing his pastorate of 44 years, as he wrote to his son-in-law Melvin Deane:

> I am glad that the church & Parish have ceased to contend for the present. How they will succeed in finding a man in whom they

> will unite is not entirely certain. May the great Head of the church guide them right. I took the liberty to give them some advice yesterday, stating that I was very desirous of having them put themselves in a position to make this a desirable field of ministerial labor; that they might obtain such a man as they need. Whether they will do it is somewhat problematical.[69]

In the summer of 1851, David Thurston traveled to Chicago, with all expenses paid, to participate in a Christian Antislavery Convention as a delegate of the American Missionary Association. As a Vice President of the AMA, he was expected to help prepare the agenda of the meeting along with two other delegates, the Reverend George Whipple, Secretary of the Association, and the Reverend Simeon Jocelyn, one of the AMA's founders. On July 3, Thurston offered the opening prayer of the afternoon session. He was elected one of several Vice Presidents of the Convention, along with the evangelist Charles Grandison Finney and Asa Mahan, President of Oberlin College, all three of whom addressed the full assembly.[70]

The delegates then split into committees, where they discussed various aspects of the churches' connections to slavery and reported their conclusions to the Convention. One of the Committees discussed "the Duty of Christians in Relation to the Fugitive Slave Bill." They proposed the following resolution, which the Convention adopted:

> Resolved, 'That every Christian owes it to his own character, as such, to the Lord that bought Him and to the religion he professes, as well is to the trembling fugitive, victimized, outraged and hunted, by this terrible enactment, to bear an unequivocal testimony against this Bill, to disobey its provisions, and to use every legitimate power which God bas put in his hands, as a citizen or as a Christian, both for its defeat and repeal. And, that any professed Christian, failing to do so, inevitably forfeits his own claim to the character of Christian, or the claim of his Christianity to the respect of mankind.[71]

Three Committees also discussed the churches' indirect connections to slavery through their support for Foreign Missions, Home Missions, and publishers of Religious Literature. Lewis Tappan and his colleagues at the Association's headquarters in New York had been working consis-

tently but unsuccessfully to pressure the national evangelical associations into taking clear anti-slavery positions and to stop supporting churches and missions that tolerated slaveholders among them. The main AMA targets were the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the American Home Missionary Society, and the American Tract Society, each of which became the focus of one of the Convention's committees, whose reports were well received by the Convention as a whole. The Convention passed several resolutions supporting the AMA's stance but refrained from criticizing any organization by name.[72]

The quotation which best summarizes the spirit of the Convention may be taken from the Report of the "Committee on the Connexion of the Churches with Slavery, through their Communion and Church Fellowship." Their conclusion was based on 2 Thessalonians 3:6, which reads in the King James version of the Bible:

> Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly.

The Committee's Report concluded:

> If these things [the evils of slavery] are disorderly, then the command of the Apostle and of Christ through him, is explicit, from such an one we must withdraw, and if our church sanctions the disorderly walk, the Scripture are equally clear, "Come out from among them."[73]

In accepting this report, the Convention had essentially accepted the doctrine of "Come-Outerism," one of the Garrisonian ideals the conservative clergy had rejected 12 years earlier, prompting the split in the anti-slavery movement at that time.

Thurston's wife, Prudence, had accompanied him as far as Adair, Michigan, where she stayed with their daughter Elizabeth, her husband Charles Philbrook, and their son, Francis. Thurston joined them on his return from Chicago and stayed in Adair until the end of July. He preached two sermons in the local church while he was there. They returned via Niagara Falls, where he made a complete tour. He later wrote, "I sat & looked, admired & wondered & adored the Being who

formed & Guided & controlled all these mighty, these stupendous works & movements. August 6, 1851."[74]

On the final leg of their trip home, the Thurstons stopped in Portland to see their sons, Brown and Samuel, with whom they must have discussed their immediate plans. Thurston's letters do not contain any reference to the difficult decision that he must already have taken:

> I remained pastor of the Church in Winthrop till Oct. 15, 1851, when, in compliance with my request, with the advice of an ecclesiastical council, I was dismissed. I was induced to request a dismission, because some desired to have a younger man, and some were dissatisfied with my antislavery course. I had conscientiously plead the cause of the enslaved, and had endeavored to act as I believed and prayed.[75]

Although he was then 72 years old, Thurston did not long entertain the idea of retiring from the pulpit; on the Sunday following his farewell sermon at Winthrop, he preached at the nearby church of Vassalborough, where he remained for the next four years. This small church could not afford to hire him full-time, so he also preached one Sunday a month at nearby Sidney and another Sunday at the North Parish of Augusta. He also tried as best he could to fulfill all the other duties of the pastorate in each church, to participate in regional and State conferences, and to give evening lectures on his favorite topics of temperance, peace, and slavery.[76]

He explained this perseverance to his daughter Harriet and her husband:

> I had a good number out last eve, & they gave a solemn attention to the word. There certainly is more of a disposition to hear. I wish I could be here all the time. I fear that any impressions which truth may make may be lost before I can be here again. This being a quarter of a minister in a place is not desirable, but I see not how it can be prevented for the present.[77]

Indeed, he was in the same situation a year later:

> My preaching and labors appear to produce so little of the desired results, that I am led to question whether I ought to attempt to

> preach statedly any longer…. But as long as there is such a famine of hearing the word of the Lord, and I love the work and am able to do something, I hold on.[78]

Nevertheless, he eventually found the work of attending to and traveling between the three parishes to be too much for him, and he was relieved when he received a call to the pulpit at Searsport, Maine. Shortly after arriving in his new parish, he slipped and fell on the ice, injuring his knee, which kept him from visiting his new parishioners as soon as he would have liked. Nevertheless, he stayed in Searsport for four years. He moved to his final pastorate at Litchfield, another small town near Winthrop, in January 1859, shortly before reaching 80.[79]

About the same time that dissension arose in the Winthrop church, Thurston's wife, Prudence, began to suffer from a severe depression, which began in her sixties, lasted for nearly 20 years, and intensified when her youngest child, Harriet, married Melvin Deane in 1848 and left the family nest. After nearly 40 years of bearing and raising five children to adulthood, plus three who died in childhood, it would not have been unusual if she felt an emptiness in her life. "It was due to her thrift, forethought and administrative ability that with the limited income of four hundred dollars a year she was able to bring up a large family…." Now, she was about to be torn away from her Winthrop friends and her position in the community as a member of all the women's Christian auxiliary societies that a minister's wife was expected to join and often to lead.[80]

Prudence Thurston's relationship with her husband also poses questions. During their child-raising years, he was so preoccupied with the affairs of his parish and social reform that he had little time for household matters. "The family saw but little of him except at meal and prayer times because he was usually occupied in his study when at home or in attending to the numerous calls of his parishioners." In later years, he did what he could to help Prudence through her feelings of despair and worthlessness, but his attempts at reassurance and applications of prayer and scripture seemed to have little effect. At times, he even seemed to despair of heavenly guidance: "But if we only had the sensible presence of the Saviour, we might be happy, notwithstanding." Through a long career as a spiritual counselor, Thurston must have developed some sense of practical psychology, but as a young man, he demonstrated an astonishing lack of sensitivity

when he named their eldest child after his first wife, Eunice Farley. Prudence's firstborn was a continual reminder that she would always be number two.[81]

In most respects, David Thurston was such a Godly man that it must have been hard for any member of his family to measure up to his example. His grandson Henry Brown Richardson once wrote to his parents:

> I have some idea of writing to Grandfather some of these days—that is I suppose I ought to as I have told him I would a great many times and never did it yet. He is such a good man, I don't know what to say to him; you see the first thing I should know I should be saying something wicked and then—Well, I suppose it will have to be done. "However this kind cometh not out save by fasting and prayer."[82]

After David Thurston's death in 1865, Prudence went to live with her daughter Harriet and Harriet's second husband and was soon completely recovered from her depression. Living with a saint is not always easy.[83]

David Thurston was much too humble to think of sainthood. Like most good Christians who had experienced their conversions 50 years before, he considered himself a sinner and sometimes doubted that he had been chosen to be saved. He was also quite aware of his ordinary faults, for example, as he confessed to Harriet, "I always knew I had no talent for epistolatory writing. If I undertake to write a social letter, just as likely as not, I shall begin to sermonize." He mellowed with age. As a young minister, he was so doctrinaire that he would refuse to release parishioners who wished to join another denomination. He later became so ecumenical that he would even exchange parishes with Methodist preachers. To the last, however, he remained true to his Calvinist heritage, writing "…nothing short of omnipotent agency of the Holy Spirit could change the hearts of sinners."[84]

Thurston placed a high value on the authority of scripture. The most extreme example of that respect was his refusal to officiate at his son Brown's second wedding. As he explained to Harriet and the Richardsons after consulting his Bible,

> The result was that my conviction, that the scriptures forbid a man to marry the sister of a deceased wife, was strengthened

> rather than weakened. I was therefor constrained to write to him, that as long as this doubt of its lawfulness remained, I could not do it! "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!" I should be very glad to gratify Brown, and I suppose Deacon Chapman [the bride's father] and probably others. But here I am and can see no way of escape. I do not know, but I ought to have labored to convince Brown and Amanda that they ought not to be married.[85]

Neither would he brook any compromise on the question of slavery. Until late in his life, he continued his evening lectures and would occasionally write articles for local publications and pamphlets on the subject. When the Southern States seceded, he was initially opposed to restraining them by force, because he firmly believed that making war was a sin: "But better, far better to let the deluded, insane Southerners go." Nevertheless, he reluctantly reconciled himself to the necessity of resistance since it was "… the duty of the government to keep the peace and suppress mobs," and he regarded the rebellion as a mob on a large scale.[86]

He was more than reluctant to see members of his family take up arms for what still seemed a cause of dubious merit:

> We are sorry that John [Deane, Harriet's stepson,] is cherishing the military spirit. It is very much at variance with the Spirit of the Prince of peace. I very much fear that many of our young men, professors of religion in the army will rue the day of their enlistment. Camp life must be very unfavorable to a life of piety. Do you hear anything from Henry? I fear many godless boys will lose their souls as well as their lives in the war…. I see no indication that the government or Congress intends to do anything towards removing the cause of the war. Are any petitions from N.H. sent to the President or to Congress asking them to do anything for its removal. The President in his message to Congress does not even allude to the cause. Neither religious nor political papers, save the Principia, or sermons on the war, that I see, urge the removal of the cause. Yet there seems to be a general expectation, that somehow or other the result of the war is to be the emancipation of the slaves…. I discern nothing in the present movements that looks like the termination of slavery, but a good deal which has the appearance of sustaining it in the states which

> do not secede. The most distressing feature of all this is, that there is no more evidence of a spirit of penitence and humiliation in the free states for our participation in the crime of slavery. God, in his infinite mercy, may, and I pray that He will bring the dreadful curse and sin of our nation to a close. But some other instrumentalities must be employed than are now used.[87]

He continued to denigrate the government's efforts at compromise with pro-Union slaveholders:

> What reason have we to believe that the righteous displeasure of God towards our guilty nation will abate, until the undeniable cause of that displeasure is removed? The President is recommending to Congress to propose to purchase the slaves of Union slaveholders. That is recognizing their right to hold them as their property If the nation consents to that, that will be avowing the abominable principle, the very heresy, which has awakened the Divine anger against us. It will be rewarding men for having committed the mightiest wrong to their fellow men, rewarding men for having been so wicked as to deprive a portion of their fellow men of all the rights to which God has given them… let not the government sanction the guilty fantasy!, the enormous heresy that man can be rightly held as property.[88]

Nevertheless, he showed signs of growing optimism as the date of Lincoln's promised Emancipation Proclamation approached. In a letter to Harriet in November 1862, he outlined a sermon he was writing:

> I have for a long time had gloomy apprehensions in regard to the fate of our country. But looking to find something for which to be thankful in regard to the country, I have been somewhat cheered…. In my discourse, I have named 9 reasons for hope, that God, having purified us in a measure by the discipline through which He is carrying us, will yet bless and prosper us: The Lord, who loves righteousness & hates Iniquity, reigns. The changes in other countries within this century, in favor of freedom and Christianity, The mutual dependence of civilized nations upon each other, The changed views in our country in favor of universal freedom, The need of the benighted portions of men for

> a pure, unmutilated gospel, The righteousness of our cause in contrast with that of the rebels, The progress the government has made in a right direction, as the abolition of slavery, The unusual spirit of prayer for our country, especially the rulers, The efforts made for the spiritual benefit of the army and navy.[89]

In 1859, David Thurston became President of the American Missionary Association. This was largely an honorific title awarded in recognition of Thurston's devotion to the cause of abolition and his service to the AMA. At that time, the real business of the Association was carried on by Lewis Tappan and his associates from their New York office, but even Thurston's limited ceremonial duties could raise problems, as he wrote in 1862, "I lamed my right thumb and…had between 3 and 400 Certificates of Life membership in the Am. Miss. Asso. to sign, and have only signed and returned 100 of them."[90]

By that time, the AMA had already begun its large and lasting effort to provide charitable assistance and education to the growing number of liberated slaves. As early as September 3, 1861, AMA missionary Reverend Lewis C. Lockwood arrived at Hampton, Virginia, the site of Fortress Monroe, a Union stronghold guarding the entry to Chesapeake Bay and the James River at the southern tip of the Virginia peninsula. By January 17, 1861, he had opened the first of several AMA schools for Black slaves fleeing Confederate servitude. This was only the beginning of a rapidly growing corps of AMA missionaries who followed practically on the heels of Union soldiers, established schools, and extended charity to newly freed Blacks throughout the occupied South. By October 1864, the Association was instructing 12,000 pupils in day schools and many more in night classes. The Association's 250 teachers and missionaries persisted in their efforts despite opposition from Southerners and even from Union Army officers. Their mission continued during Reconstruction and beyond as they promoted public schools and helped found schools for teacher training as well as colleges and universities for Blacks.[91]

The AMA was originally an independent, interdenominational organization, but eventually became part of the loose structure of the Congregational Church. The AMA was never really disbanded, but finally disappeared when it was subsumed into the Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ under its Constitution of 1957.[92]

David Thurston supported the AMA educational and charitable works as best he could:

> The AMA "conscience" in Litchfield Corner, Maine, David Thurston, had little money so he became a self-appointed collection agent. Thurston, who mourned that so many New England Ministers "should be so blinded to the real character of slaveholding," was an example of a Christian abolitionist. He rejoiced that the war might end slavery, but said emancipation was merely the beginning of Christian work. Christians had a duty not only to minister to freedmen but also to destroy the "vile spirit of caste." There yet remained "very much to be done to remove that unnatural, mean, proud, hateful, cruel, exceedingly wicked prejudice…. It is as contrary to the principles of & spirit of Christianity as hatred is to love, he said. He feared that "more prayerful & prolonged efforts" would be required to destroy the deep-rooted, "shamefully wrong & wicked" hatred of blacks than for the removal of slavery since the former was so 'extensively tolerated even in church." Thurston tirelessly collected clothing and money for freedmen until he died in 1865.[93]

He preached his last sermon on the day after President Lincoln's funeral, and only 17 days before he died on May 7, 1865, at the age of 85.[94]

The Reverend Henry Richardson

Henry Richardson graduated from the Bangor Seminary in 1829 or 1830. Given the problems that the school experienced in those years, it would not be surprising if there were certain gaps in Henry Richardson's preparation for the ministry. Fortunately, the Reverend David Thurston took a special interest in Henry, perhaps inviting him to his home during school holidays or even accepting him for private, post-graduate instruction. This would explain how Henry met and courted Thurston's oldest daughter, Eunice. Henry could hardly have found a more competent mentor than Thurston, who some years before had declined an offer from Bangor to become their professor of theology.[95]

In 1829, a small Congregational Church was organized in Sidney, Maine, and Henry Richardson was ordained its pastor on November 23,

1831. Sidney was only about 20 miles from Winthrop, where the Reverend David Thurston was pastor. This was convenient for Henry, who continued to court Thurston's daughter, although she was 13 years younger than he. On September 3, 1832, they were married. Their first child, John Francis, was born in Sidney on August 25, 1833. Despite financial assistance from the Maine Missionary Society, the congregation at Sidney apparently felt unable to pay him a salary sufficient to support his new family, and he was dismissed on September 20, 1833.[96]

Unfortunately for young ministers such as Henry, the problems of the Sidney church were not unique. The Congregational Church was having difficulty establishing its ministers in many parts of Maine at that time. Until 1820, Maine had been part of Massachusetts, where the State would tax all adult male residents to pay Protestant ministers' salaries. The Congregationalists benefited the most from this subsidy since theirs was still the established church, and their congregations received the default head tax unless parishioners opted for another church. When Maine separated from Massachusetts in 1820, the Congregational church was disestablished under the new State constitution, and all churches had to fend for themselves. At that time, however, Maine was still a frontier State, and in dozens of new, small towns, most settlers were still clearing their land and living at a subsistence level. Typically, these subsistence farmers had little or no extra income to support their churches. This was less of a problem for the Methodists and the Baptists. The Methodists used circuit riders to spread the gospel in frontier areas; these were, for the most part, educated preachers who rode regular routes and held services wherever they could find a convenient meeting place. The Baptists would build or share meeting houses with other denominations, but they usually did not pay salaries to their ministers, who pursued other activities, such as farming, to support themselves and their families. Nevertheless, the Baptists had less difficulty filling their pulpits because they did not require their ministers to pursue advanced studies in theology at that time, but rather that they be sincere Christians, and inspirational preachers, well-versed in the Holy Scriptures.

The Congregationalists had established the Maine Missionary Society, which would supplement the salaries of ministers serving in poorer parishes and send them on temporary assignments to preach to groups without regular pastors. The Society's Report for the year 1836–37 gives an idea of the scope of their work:

> There have been in the employment of the Society, during the year past, 90 missionaries…. They have supplied for a portion of the time, about 150 places. 15 of the missionaries have taken the pastoral charge of churches, during the time of their labors; and all these, except 2, are in feeble establishments which are under the patronage of this Society.[97]

Following his dismissal from the church in Sidney, Henry became pastor of the Congregational Church in Brownville, Piscataquis County, in Maine's sparsely settled North; the Missionary Society's Report for 1838–39 gives us an idea of the situation there during Henry's pastorate:

> In Penobscot and Piscataquis counties, there are 25 Churches; and yet many other places where Churches might be embodied, and yet, only 6 pastors. There are several stated supplies, and occasional preaching afforded in various places. 16 of these churches will need aid. This Society has furnished aid to the greater portion of the destitute Churches in this region in the course of the year past…. As there are constantly…new settlements rising up, much more must be done, to give a healthy influence to the operations of religion; much more aid must be furnished, to cause the means of grace, in any good measure, to keep pace with a rapidly extending population.[98]

While in Brownville, he officiated at the wedding of his sister Mabel, who married Jedediah Hall Morrill, a farmer of nearby Williamsburg, on June 1, 1836. Three of Mabel and Jedidiah's eight children died in early childhood. These frontier towns were not easy places to raise children, which perhaps led Henry and Eunice to return to her childhood home in Winthrop, Maine, for the birth of their second child, Henry Brown Richardson, on August 23, 1837.[99]

The economic depression that followed the financial panics of 1837 and 1839 was one of the most severe that the United States has experienced. The fact that prices fell by 33% at the national level from 1839 to 1843 must have been devastating for Maine's lumber industry, although probably not as painful for small farmers who were less connected to the market economy. Perhaps the ramifications of the crisis even reached as far as Brownville, Maine. In any event, Reverend Henry was dismissed as Pastor of the congregation at Brownville in the winter of 1838.[100]

The following spring, Henry took his family westward to the New Hampshire border, where he preached not only in Gilead, Maine, but also in the neighboring town of Shelburne, New Hampshire. Eunice and Henry's third and last child, Mary Elizabeth, was born in Gilead on May 2, 1841. Reverend Henry established close working relationships with his two congregations and stayed there for 11 years. One of the keys to this success was the support of Deacon George Whitefield Chapman, an early settler of Gilead, whose family was also prominent in nearby Bethel, Maine. It was probably only a coincidence that Chapman's father, Eliphaz Chapman, had been the pastor of the Second Church in Methuen, where Reverend Henry's grand-uncles were members. As Deacon of the Gilead Church, Chapman would manage the congregation's finances and, if needed, negotiate with the Maine Missionary Society for subsidies to pay the pastor's salary. Deacon Chapman was probably a close friend of the Reverend David Thurston, as he gave one of his sons the middle name Thurston. Thurston's son Brown, a printer and publisher in Portland, Maine, further cemented the relationship in 1842 when he married Chapman's daughter, Harriet.[101]

The Gilead Congregational Church Record Book notes that Reverend Henry Richardson was ordained as Pastor for Shelburne as well as Gilead. The church records do not say how Henry divided his time between the two churches, but he probably held services on Sunday afternoon in Shelburne as his successor did. We can imagine him riding back and forth every Sunday in the depths of a Maine winter on a horse-drawn sleigh, along the eight miles that separated Gilead from Shelburne. Many years later, he wrote to his daughter-in-law: "My time for sleigh rides is past. I remember the years gone by when I used to face the cold winds which blew down this valley, and sometimes chilled me to the bones almost. Now I have a great aversion to currents of cold air."[102]

He left Gilead in the spring of 1849 and in March 1850, became pastor of the church in Goshen, Sullivan County, New Hampshire. He stayed there for 11 or 12 years, during which "he and his family were greatly loved and respected by the people." Throughout his years in the ministry, however, the family's standard of living probably never rose much above a subsistence level. He could hardly have earned a substantial living in this simple farming community of 650 persons, especially since there were Baptist and Methodist churches in the same township. In 1819, New Hampshire disestablished the Congregational Church, and

its preeminent position declined thereafter. In agricultural areas, Congregationalism was associated with the moneyed interests of the East Coast, and farm families tended to favor the Baptist and Methodist denominations.[103]

During the 1850s, Reverend Henry's correspondence suggested that he was mildly depressive. He undoubtedly had numerous reasons for discouragement besides the family's relative poverty. His wife, Eunice, suffered from a serious illness beginning in 1854. The community as a whole was growing older, and young people were moving to the West in search of new opportunities and new farmland. He often wrote of deaths in the community, of funerals at which he would have to officiate, and once mentioned his foreboding that he would not live many years longer. In fact, although an invalid during his last years, he lived on until March 24, 1882, when he died at the age of 83.[104]

His correspondence with his son Henry was interrupted soon after the beginning of the Civil War, so little information is available about the circumstances of his dismissal from the pulpit at Goshen. By January 1862, his father-in-law had learned that he was in ill health but improving. Church records show that he had returned to Gilead by September 1, 1862, and that he preached there for several years. His "rheumatism," however, prevented him from resuming a full-time ministry.[105]

During a visit to Gilead in 1862, David Thurston noted that "Mr. Richardson is feeble. He is very lame and cannot walk without two crutches, and it is no just matter of surprize that he should feel as though his prospect of recovery was not bright. Cold weather is not favorable for rheumatism. He seems patient, but can take no exercise."[106]

He continued to sign the church record book as Acting Pastor until 1865, when the following entry appears: "Rev Henry Richardson resumed labor as A.P. but so feeble as to be compelled to go through the service in a sitting posture." Thereafter, he continued to sign the record book as "clerk."[107]

When Mary Elizabeth Richardson returned to Gilead with her family, she was nearly 21, an eminently marriageable age for an attractive young lady. Among the young men who noticed her arrival was William Reade Peabody, who had attended elementary school with her brother Henry. William's courtship was readily accepted, and he and Mary Elizabeth were married on October 29, 1863. William was descended from one of the region's earliest settlers. In fact, the area around Gilead, Maine, and neighboring Shelburne, New Hampshire, was originally

called "The Peabody Patent," and in 1773 had been sold by the Colony of Massachusetts to a group of four investors, including William's ancestor John Peabody. Some 20 years passed, however, before there were many permanent settlers in the future town of Gilead. One of them, Thomas Peabody, built the Peabody House, which William would inherit years later, and which became William and Mary Elizabeth's home. The Peabody House thus became the final residence of the Reverend Henry Richardson and his wife Eunice, who were living there with their daughter and son-in-law in 1864.[108]

The Reverend Henry Richardson did not leave a significant mark in the pages of church history. Although strongly opposed to slavery, he was not active in the anti-slavery movement and tried to avoid public expression of partisan political sentiment. As the 1856 presidential campaign got underway, he wrote to his son Henry:

> I should not be surprised if the Democrats should prevail in this town. Possibly they may carry the state, but I hope not. Though I have little sympathy with the peculiar tenants of the Know-Nothings, I should be sorry to have New Hampshire identified with the supporters of Pierce and the Slave-ocracy. But I do not mean to be absorbed in political strife.[109]

His active career as a minister was relatively short, and he could not have reached many people in the small towns where he preached. It is difficult to classify Henry Richardson's theological outlook on the basis of the one outline of a sermon that has survived; his notes show that he delivered it to seven different congregations between 1834 and 1861. Selections from this surviving text suggest that he was still an adherent to the New England Theology as dispensed at Andover and Bangor, but that he had accepted the new evangelical synthesis concerning free will: that is, the individual not only can but must choose to approach God and seek salvation.[110]

> And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isaiah 55, 7)

This verse offers a conditional promise of salvation based on repentance. After citing this verse, however, he quickly reminded his parishioners that, following Calvinist doctrine, they should in no way count on

good works as a means of earning salvation, but that they must completely humiliate themselves before their Creator:

> He who pretends to be saved through his own merit must forsake this very self righteousness and come as a poor perishing sinner unto Christ….

Many of the self-righteous parishioners in his congregation were probably loath to admit that they were poor sinners. Quoting Amos 8, he reminded them gently of certain sins that few could have avoided in their ordinary lives, such as failing to keep the Sabbath or perhaps dealing too sharply in their commercial transactions:

> 3. God says to the Sabbath breaker, "let the wicked forsake his way". He says the same to the dishonest man….
> 4. Hear this, O you that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail,
> 5. Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

Congregationalist preachers such as Henry Richardson continued to denounce "sharp dealing" by traders and storekeepers as they had since the earliest days of the colony. And if his parishioners still believed that they had somehow escaped the bonds of their depraved natures, he would direct their attention back to Isaiah 55, 7, and the persistence of sinful thoughts, which even the most righteous find difficult to banish. Reverend Henry did not evoke the sufferings of the damned—at least in this sermon—but he did offer this warning:

> From what has been said, we may infer that if sinners do not repent and turn to God they will not experience His saving and pardoning mercy… there would be no consistency with divine character and government in pardoning sinners who will continue to rebel against Him.

He concludes with words of encouragement and hope, but makes no promise of salvation for those who repent:

> Seek the Lord while he may be found and call upon him while he is near. (Isaiah 55, 6)
>
> Is He not near to you now? He is near with the light and privileges of His blessed way. He is near by the word of His grace and hope. He is near by the influence of His Holy Spirit.

In this sermon, Reverend Henry avoided direct references to the difficult issues of Old Calvinist orthodoxy: predestination, free will, and original sin. He emphasized the positive aspects of doctrine and called for repentance and belief, as did the revivalist preachers. Still, he was obviously far from the impassioned harangues that motivated the conversions of thousands during the First and Second Great Awakenings. He was not a charismatic preacher, and most of his sermons were probably dull. Nevertheless, his presence made a difference in the lives of many of his faithful parishioners. His correspondence with his son Henry reveals him not only as a sincere and devout Christian but also as a kind and compassionate human being who supported and comforted his parishioners during the trials and tragedies of their everyday lives.

From a purely personal point of view, it was a considerable accomplishment for this poor shoemaker's son to have pursued advanced studies with little financial help from his family, to graduate from the Bangor Theological Seminary, and to be ordained as a Congregational Minister. In a few short years, he had advanced several rungs up the social ladder, so quickly in fact that one wonders whether he was quite ready to assume the role of community leadership that his new position required. In any event, Reverend Henry's enhanced social position and his marital alliance with the respected Thurston family would open many doors and new career possibilities for his sons.

A New England Childhood

Henry Brown Richardson was born at his grandparents' home in Winthrop, Maine, but his earliest memories probably go back to Gilead, Maine. His father served as Pastor there from 1839, when Henry was not yet two years old, until the spring of 1850, when he was 12. Despite the ravages of clear-cutting, which scalped the surrounding mountain tops a half-century later, Gilead probably looks much the same today as it did during Henry's childhood. The town itself is spread out for about six

miles from east to west along the Androscoggin River. The main road over the hill from Bethel, on the East, still follows the river on the south side.[111]

The first building on the right as one enters the town is the Peabody House, which became the home of Henry's sister after she married William Reade Peabody. This building is better known as the Peabody Tavern, and it was operated as such for many years. The Great Trunk Railway (now the Atlantic and St. Laurence) began serving the town in 1851 and was completed through to Montreal in 1853. The railroad may have sealed the Tavern's doom, but the Peabodys had long had an active business serving road-weary travelers who would stop over on their way to or from northern New Hampshire and beyond. Even if the railroad was bad for the tavern's business, it eventually became a source of income for William Peabody, who supplied firewood as fuel for passing locomotives.[112]

A few miles later, on the left is the White Mountain National Forest campground, and then across the tracks on the right is what appears to be the center of town, the little-used town hall and a few run-down cabins. Here, a bridge crosses the Androscoggin, and a second road runs along its north bank through about eight miles of woods and occasional cleared farmland to Shelburne, New Hampshire. Back on the main road, about a hundred yards further west on the left is a pleasant-looking motel, where the Wild River comes roaring down the hill from the south to join the relatively peaceful Androscoggin River. When asked about the church, the motel manager explains that it burned down many years ago and shows a picture of the church and several houses, which used to be on the southern hillside back toward the present campground.

Gilead's population was 359 in 1850. Along the banks of the Androscoggin River lay some of the best farmland in the region, which produced excellent crops of corn and potatoes. Mountains on all sides enhance the growing conditions by protecting the valley from early autumn frosts. Before the Railroad came through town, the nearest market town was Portland, about 80 miles distant—five days round-trip for a farmer with a loaded wagon, who could not have been expected to make the trip more than once a year. While the Richardsons lived there, the town's residents were mostly subsistence farmers with little cash income. In 2020, Gilead's population was only 195, with very few employed in farming.[113]

In the early 1900s, Henry's brother, John, described the town as he had known it:

> There a great turbulent river flowed between high and rugged mountains, scarred by great patches of black where some recent clearing had been burned over. A few farms were on either side of the river, some of the houses built of unhewn logs. Great pine stumps still stood in the cultivated fields of the narrow valley while an unbroken forest extended for a hundred miles northward to the Canadian Boundary.[114]

Today, as one passes through Gilead, the predominant feeling is still isolation. Second-growth pines now stand tall along the roads, reclaiming laboriously cleared fields and reinforcing the barriers between the few remaining townspeople and the outside world.

This isolated community was Henry Brown Richardson's home during his earliest years. The isolation, visual, geographic, and economic, carried over into the realm of ideas, where most of the population was satisfied with those presented in the orthodox Congregational sermons of the Reverend Henry Richardson. Perhaps because this was Maine, there were free thinkers and non-conformists as well as a Methodist church, but it was rarely deemed necessary to cut off church members from communion. One of the few parishioners who had the background necessary to discuss church history and doctrine was Deacon George Whitefield Chapman, whose father had been a minister. It is interesting to note that Deacon Chapman and Reverend Henry's father were both born in Methuen, Massachusetts. Deacon Chapman was named after George Whitefield, one of the leading "New Light" preachers of the First Great Awakening, whereas Reverend Henry's father may have been named after Pastor John Barnard of North Andover, one of the most outspoken of Whitefield's "Old Light" opponents. It seems unlikely that these issues had retained enough of their emotional charge to cause conflict after more than a century. One can easily imagine, however, that there were serious discussions of church history as it related to current issues whenever the Chapmans and Richardsons got together, and especially when the Thurstons, their mutual in-laws, came to visit. Young Henry and his brother, John, likely heard so often about events such as the First and Second Great

Awakenings and the Cambridge Platform that their significance became part of the boys' general culture.

Despite poverty and isolation, Gilead residents would not neglect their worship services or the education of their children. In a brief paper entitled "A District School in 1850," written about 1900, John described a one-room schoolhouse that was probably the one he and Henry attended in Gilead. In this school, the main term was established for eight weeks during the winter. The town could not afford to hire an experienced teacher, so the master's chair was usually filled by a student working to help pay for his education, as John and Henry's father had done. There were usually from 15 to 25 pupils ranging in age from 5 to 20. John described the school:

> The door opened directly into the schoolroom. At the opposite end stood the teacher's desk, while on either side, a bench was fixed against the wall. Here the pupil either had to sit bolt upright or to lean forward. These seats were provided with a long desk. A low seat for the younger children ran in front of it. As the Winter term was mainly for the benefit of the older scholars, these poor little people got but scant attention from the teacher except in the way of reprimand and had to sit all day with nothing to do, save for one or two short recitations. A stove stood near the center of the room. Above it the ceiling was blackened and torn away and someone had scrawled around the hole, "Stroke of the bloody wand". It was not reassuring to the new master to learn that this was the evidence of the fierce struggle which had resulted not long before in turning the (previous) teacher out.
>
> A little before nine o'clock the boys and girls began to arrive. The boys were generally clad in homespun of greyish blue or tawny brown. All of them had leg boots and long trousers which were tied around the boot at the ankle to keep out the snow. No boy had an overcoat. Even if his parents could have afforded such a luxury, he would have scorned to wear it, for it would have been a mark of effeminacy. Most of them had woolen caps with ear pieces, and wore long knit scarves or comforters, and mittens knit with stripes of white and blue, or a band of red around the wrist. They gathered about the stove and scraped the snow off their boots on its hearth, sending up clouds of steam full of

suggestions of the barn-yard. Fresh air, however, came in plentifully through a hundred cracks and crevices….

The pupils were allowed to choose their own seats, except that the larger, older ones claimed those with desks. The boys occupied one side of the room, facing the girls upon the other side. Whether this arrangement helped to concentrate the attention of the pupil upon his studies may seem doubtful. The school was opened by reading a chapter from the New Testament by all except the youngest pupils, each one reading two verses in turn…. The studies were few, being limited to reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic. grammar, and geography. Nevertheless it was no easy matter to arrange classes where scarcely two pupils were of the same age and where each one appeared to have a different textbook….

One of the first things requiring attention was the making of a "fire list". For this only the large boys were eligible. Each boy on the list had for a week to build the fire each morning and to chop enough wood from the pile of twelve-foot logs to keep it going. This in the coldest weather was no sinecure. The wood was green and he must find his kindling where he could. However, he usually had considerable help from his school fellows, who used the axe at recess or at noon to show their skill or for exercise. The sweeping and cleaning were done at noon by the larger girls. Recitations were confined to the questions in the various textbooks. In grammar the conjugations were learned and certain rules to be applied in parsing. Composition was never required. In arithmetic the tables of the weights and measures and the rules by which correct answers for the examples given could be worked out were memorized and recited, but there was seldom any attempt to make the pupil understand why, for example, he could multiply a fraction to divide it, much less to explain the mysteries of square or cube root. There was no blackboard. The pupil ciphered on his slate. When he could not get the correct answer, he called upon the teacher for help….

Discipline was severe or lax according to the character of the teacher. I have known of severity almost brutal but punishments were usually mild. This was certainly the case in the school I am describing. The boys who had made it so unpleasant for a former teacher were no longer in the school; the older scholars were

> studious and well-disposed, or the master's career might have been even shorter than it was. As he dared not administer corporal punishment to the big boys, he decided to treat all alike and give it up altogether. The most troublesome were boys of his own age but by assuming an unnatural dignity and by various expedients such as keeping them after school and making personal appeals to their sense of right and honor, they were kept in tolerable order….
>
> The last day of school was a sort of exhibition day. The committee and usually some of the parents were in attendance. The scholars were specially drilled in their recitations on the previous day and admonished to behave with propriety. The members of the committee addressed the school, expressing their gratification at the great progress made in all branches of learning; the teacher made his farewell speech, for he would probably never teach the same school again, and the older scholars went to labor on the farm or about the house until the next winter.
>
> The summer school was always taught by a woman, usually a young woman, and was attended by much younger children. Those old enough to work were kept at home and in constant employment. The methods of teaching were much the same as in the Winter schools but the very young had much more of the teacher's time and attention. The smaller children, when reciting, were required to stand in line, usually with their toes on a crack in the floor, and "make their manners" before beginning. The school-marm seldom used her ferule, but pulled or boxed the ears of the unruly and mischievous, or invented punishments…. To be sent to sit on the girls' side of the room was a degradation which filled the small boy's soul with shame.[115]

John and Henry were luckier than most of their classmates because their family often visited their grandparents, David and Prudence Thurston, in Winthrop, Maine. This was not a voyage to be undertaken lightly in the 1840s, as John reminds us:

> My first recollections of travel are journeys we frequently made to my mother's early home. In those days we drove in a two-wheeled chaise; the little trunk which held the few changes of clothing then required was hung from the axle tree, while the

> small boy sat on the lunch box between his elders. We had to make an early start to cover half the distance in one day. About noon of the second day the [Androscoggin] river our road had been following turned to the south while we continued eastward and began to cross long, rolling hills. When after several hours we reached the top of one of the highest, we were in sight of our journey's end….
>
> Here, we looked out upon low, undulating hills, between them lakes and ponds reflecting the sky. On the hillsides were highly cultivated farms, each with its orchard and wood lot, the tilled fields divided by stone walls. At our feet stretching far away to the north, lay a considerable lake, known as the upper pond, and to the south, the lower pond, nearly as large. Between these two ponds ran a stream. We could see the roof of the cotton mill and its little belfry. The grist mill, woolen mill, tannery, machine shops, and saw mills clustered about the hills. We could trace the long main street of the village which ran straight over the hill to the State Capitol, ten miles distant. Far away, on the very summit of this hill stood the "old" meeting-house, now the town house, and half way up, just where the village ended, stood the new one. White and immaculate, adorned with green blinds, a clock and belfry, its high steeple crowned with gilded ball and weather vane, it seemed to my boyish fancy like the beautiful bride of Hebrew poetry.[116]

John and Henry's grandfather had been the Congregational Pastor in Winthrop since 1807. The church that Henry's family attended when they visited Winthrop was dedicated in 1825. The building still exists on upper Main Street, but has been converted to apartments. In 1905, on a site closer to the center of town, the parishioners dedicated a new church, which still receives a large and active congregation every Sunday. The Thurstons welcomed the Richardsons and other visitors to their home, which was near the previous church building.[117]

In the Thurston home, the atmosphere and daily routine seemed even more devoutly religious than at the Richardsons. The Sabbath was so confining as to be nearly unsupportable for an active youngster. There were morning, afternoon, and evening church services, each more than an hour long, plus Sabbath School. A small child might not run, play, or make loud noises and had access only to books with religious content.

"Even on weekdays he was not allowed to read a storybook or any work of fiction and was obliged to return unread a book of fairy tales loaned by a school mate."[118]

Even in this restrictive atmosphere, the boys found ways to express themselves, especially Henry:

> There was a tradition among the village boys that … [Brown Thurston] once climbed up to and stood on the gilded ball which surmounted the meeting-house steeple. Years later, an emulous grandson [Henry Brown Richardson] was watched from a window… by his mother, with silent apprehension for she dared not call to him, while he stood on the veering vane and attempted to carve his initials on the ball….
>
> The same boy who climbed the steeple, having heard his grandfather say that no man could go out at midnight and, looking up at the starry firmament, solemnly proclaim, "There is no God", took it for a sort of challenge. He stole out of the house at midnight and, to make his act more awful, went over and stood in front of the meeting-house, while he looked up and three times repeated the dread denial. Finding that nothing happened to him, he stole back again to bed.[119]

It is tempting to generalize from these few known incidents of Henry's childhood. From the steeple adventure, perhaps the result of a playmate's dare, we see early evidence of his physical courage and his sense of honor—at least a small boy's honor. The "dread denial" fits in equally well with what his later correspondence reveals: his eternal readiness to question the generally accepted wisdom of the age. Of course, John was writing half a century after the events, a lapse of time more than sufficient for the growth of family mythology. Nevertheless, Henry's later correspondence suggests that his relationship with his grandfather was generally negative despite the latter's patient efforts to redeem the young pagan. On May 2, 1857, Henry, then in Milwaukee, wrote to his parents:

> Where are Grandfather and Grandmother now and how are they? I have some idea of writing to Grandfather some of these days—that is I suppose I ought to as I have told him I would a great many times and never did it yet. He is such a good man, I don't

know what to say to him; you see the first thing I should know I should be saying something wicked and then—Well, I suppose it will have to be done. "However, this kind cometh not out save by fasting and prayer."[120]

Adolescence and Apprenticeship

The Richardson family arrived in Goshen, New Hampshire, in March 1850. Henry was 12 years old, and he was beginning his adolescent years in a small New Hampshire town about twice the size of Gilead. He must have had the impression that his horizons were broadening, at least visually. When he lived at the bottom of the Androscoggin Valley, surrounded by giant first-growth pines, it wasn't exactly like a hole in the ground, but a lot more sky was visible from the laboriously cleared farmers' fields around Goshen. What was the new town like? An 1855 gazetteer tells us:

> GOSHEN, Sullivan county…. Area, 12,023 acres. Distance from Concord, 42 miles, north-west; from Newport, 10, south-east. From Sunapee Mountain, lying in the east part of this town, spring numerous small streams, which unite in forming Sugar River…. The soil is particularly adapted to the growth of grass. Large quantities of maple sugar are manufactured here annually. A plumbago vein of considerable extent and richness is wrought here. The varieties of rock are mica, slate, gneiss, and granite. A Congregational church was formed here 1802, and a Baptist society in 1803. There is also a society called Christians. There are two stores and five common schools in this town….
>
> Population, 659. Number of legal voters in 1854, 166. Inventory, $181,372. Value of lands, $92,476. Number of sheep, 2744. Do. neat stock, 824. Do. horses, 143.[121]

How did the Richardson children fit into the new community? It was not easy for the boys because they were absent from Goshen for much of the year, attending school in Portland, Maine. John and Henry were now old enough that friends of their own age seemed almost as important to them as their family, so moving to a new community and attending schools far from home were surely unwelcome changes. Their special status as a minister's sons who did not attend local schools made it more

difficult for them to integrate into their new community. Still, their life in Goshen must have influenced their developing worldviews because the new town was so different from Gilead.

First of all, Goshen was less isolated from the rest of the world. Goshen's population probably had a less homogenized religious outlook, as suggested by the presence of three Protestant churches. In contrast, the Congregational Church, with the boys' father in the pulpit, had been the principal religious authority in Gilead. Henry even had one friend whose father was an "unbeliever." These new associations must have reinforced Henry's natural tendency to question the conventional wisdom represented by his father.[122]

It was probably about this time that young Henry Richardson began to take an interest in politics. The Democrats had dominated New Hampshire politics in the first half of the 19th century. In the early 1800s, the Jeffersonian ideal of the self-sufficient yeoman suited New Hampshire farmers, who supported Democratic platforms of easy money, low tariffs, and disestablishment of the Congregational Church. They also accepted the States' Rights rationale for slavery in the South. Franklin Pierce, the rising star of New Hampshire's Democratic Party in the 1840s, represented the peak of Democratic power in New Hampshire when he won the Presidency as the compromise candidate of the Democratic Party in 1852. Democratic majorities persisted until an alliance of the newborn Republican Party with the No-Nothings carried the State for Fremont in 1856. Growing anti-slavery sentiment tipped the balance permanently in favor of the Republicans from that time onward.[123]

Most of New Hampshire's farmers, however, continued to vote Democrat while the rest of the State turned Republican. Goshen, a farming community, was then strongly Democratic. In the 1848 election, the victorious Democratic Governor, Jared Williams, outpolled Nathaniel Berry, the candidate of the Whig and Independent coalition, by 111 votes to 38 in Goshen, although he had won only 44.4% of the statewide vote. Sullivan County as a whole, however, was so politically diverse that one might consider it a miniature replica of New Hampshire. The inland agricultural areas of New Hampshire were nearly always Democratic, while commercial and industrial centers were Whig and later Republican. Nearby Newport, for example, was about equally divided between the two candidates for Governor in 1848, whereas Charleston and Claremont, Sullivan County's commercial

centers on the Connecticut River, gave large majorities to the Whig candidate.[124]

Politics was a serious and lively activity in New Hampshire in the 1850s. Elections were frequent because Governors were elected for terms of only one year. Campaigns were festive affairs with parades organized by the candidates' supporters, and voters went to the election much as they would go to a county fair in later years. In such a political atmosphere, Henry was surely influenced by the Democratic sentiments of his friends in Goshen. Throughout the 1850s, Henry repeatedly wrote to his parents that he was not interested in politics. Nevertheless, by 1860, when he was first eligible to vote, he was clearly a Douglas Democrat, following a political inclination established during his early years in Goshen, New Hampshire.[125]

Opportunities for secondary school education were limited in Goshen, which is probably why John and Henry went to school in Portland, Maine. Henry was in Portland as early as November 1, 1850, apparently staying with his aunt, Harriet Thurston Deane, and her husband, Melvin Deane. Deane was a civil engineer who first exposed Henry to the attractions of the engineering profession. A letter from Henry in Portland, dated December 9, 1852, with its childish handwriting and numerous misspellings, suggests that he sorely needed more advanced schooling. The subjects he was studying were "Olmstead's Philosophy, Greanleaf's Arithmetic, Green's Grammar, and Coulbern's (sic) Reading and Spelling." He was already showing a practical turn of mind when he asked his father to send him extra money so that he might add a bookkeeping course to his curriculum during the next term ($1.00 for instruction and 60 cents for the book). Henry's grandfather later sent him a pair of boots and his best English dictionary. Land surveying was often included in secondary school curricula, so Henry may have been introduced to this aspect of the engineering profession in high school. He was then lodging with his brother, John, who at age 19 was studying more advanced subjects, including Latin.[126]

In the Autumn of 1853, Henry's plans for the next year were uncertain. There were no secondary schools in Goshen, and it would have been difficult for his father to pay for tuition, board, and room in nearby Newport. It was more economical to send him to Portland, where he could board with one of his uncles. Or he might go to Hokanum, Massachusetts, to board with his uncle William Richardson, where he could be schooled at the well-established Hopkins Academy. In any

case, in October 1853, Henry wrote to his parents confirming his arrival at the old Pomroy house and farm that his Uncle William had inherited in Hokanum. As the youngest of John Barnard Richardson's boys, William was the last to stay on and help his uncle Ebenezer Pomroy with the farm work. When Ebenezer reached the biblical age of three score and ten, he decided to retire and to deed the farm and house over to his nephew on the condition that William provide for him and Aunt Sarah.[127]

Curiously, William eventually found himself in a predicament similar to that of his Uncle Pomroy, for he had six fine daughters but not one son who could help with the heavy work around the farm. William's expedient was to call on his several nephews to come and help at harvest time or during other periods of peak workload. There were the Clark boys, sons of his wife's brother, Greenleaf Clark of Newbury, and William Morrill, from Williamsburg, Maine, son of William's younger sister, Mabel. It was now Henry's turn, and he arrived in time for broom straw harvesting on Wednesday, October 5, 1853.[128]

William didn't appear suited to be a farmer. At least, that was his neighbors' opinion. His case seemed to be one of the profession finding the man rather than the man finding his profession, and when Uncle Pomroy made him a proposition he couldn't refuse, he didn't. William was much more interested in passing the time of day discussing politics, and he was occasionally seen motionless while hoeing his field and staring into space as if contemplating some momentous political or philosophical question. William's political passion was the abolition of slavery. He went out of his way to help young Black men by bringing two of them to Hockanum to work as hired men on his farm. William went so far as to say that if he had had six boys instead of six girls, he would have given each of them a rifle and gone out to Kansas to help John Brown. If Henry was already an anti-abolitionist at age 16 when he stayed at his Uncle William's farm, he would not have hesitated to express his opinion when the subject arose. There is no sign, however, that this difference cooled relations between the two, at least not at this time.[129]

Henry must have written to his parents concerning plans for the coming year. On November 15, his father replied:

> We had thought it would be best for you to stay at home the coming winter and go to school. But we understand that the

> school will probably be short—not more than six or seven weeks —and if this is your wish we are willing to have you go to Portland either to engage with your uncle Melvin or attend school. On the whole we think it may be best for you to go, but we wish you to do just as you think will be best for you. If you prefer to stay at home, we shall be very glad to have you here.[130]

At this time in his young life, Henry may have figured that further schooling was a waste of time. Considering the family's poverty and his preference for practical activity, Henry chose the solution he felt would enable him to become self-supporting as soon as possible. Henry chose to work as an apprentice with his Uncle Melvin Deane, a civil engineer in Portland, Maine. Whatever the arrangement was, the Deanes were able to give a good report on Henry to his grandfather, who replied on January 4, 1854, "It was pleasing to hear so good account of you all, particularly of Henry. We wish he would write to us." So there was Henry, launched on his lifelong career at the age of 16.[131]

But his professional project suddenly risked a premature ending when Henry's Uncle Melvin died in March 1854, hardly three months after Henry had begun his apprenticeship. How Henry found the means to continue is a mystery, but continue he did. Fortunately, this was a time of relative prosperity, and ambitious public works projects were being undertaken in Portland and nearby cities. Henry was able to find short-term employment with other civil engineers.

Meanwhile, Henry's mother became seriously ill, probably during the Summer of 1854. Henry's father wrote on August 23, 1854, "We hope she will ultimately recover her health, but it will probably be a long time. She, Aunt H[arriet], and Mary send much love." After her husband's death in 1864, Harriet Thurston Deane, her daughter Ada, and her stepson, John Deane, went to live with the Richardsons in Goshen, the two stricken families finding added strength by combining their resources. This arrangement must have worked out well because Harriet stayed with Reverend Henry and Eunice for at least six years.[132]

Henry remained in Portland, probably boarding with his Uncle Brown Thurston; a few years later, Henry expressed his regret that he had not been able to repay his debt to his Uncle Brown. There is no evidence that Henry had any further formal education, but since engineering services were mainly in demand during good weather, he may have returned to school during the winter. In any case, one can only

marvel at the competence he achieved in his profession and the level of general culture shown in his correspondence. In 1855, Henry was working for civil engineer A.P. Marshall, who was probably responsible for most of Henry's professional training. Henry may have met Marshall through his Uncle Melvin Deane or his Uncle Brown, whose print shop at 82 Exchange Street was next door to Marshall's office at 84 Exchange Street.[133]

Antipas Percival Marshall was born on June 24, 1826, in Northumberland, Coos County, New Hampshire. His parents were Judge Joshua Marshall and Betsey Day. He was named after his grandfather, who was the first preacher to settle in that section of the country and who was probably acquainted with Henry's grandfather, David Thurston.

> "Elder Marshall" was a Methodist local preacher, a deacon and elder, and preached for forty years. He was of the old-fashioned type, and proclaimed the Law as well as the Gospel in no uncertain terms. Vigorous in body, as well as in his preaching, he was well adapted to the pioneer life. A farmer, an officer of the town, besides ministering to the spiritual needs of the people, he served his generation well; he lived to a good old age and was active to the last…. He died September 23, 1846.[134]

The younger Antipas Marshall had attended Dartmouth College but was obliged to leave before completing his studies because of ill health. Thus, he was an autodidact himself and sympathetic to Henry's situation.[135]

While in the City Engineer's office on November 16, 1855, Henry took time out to write a note to his parents, saying he was not sure how much longer Marshall would need him. Marshall never went so far as to guarantee permanent employment. A few weeks later, Henry must have been out of work because he was considering whether to go to sea or to go out West. As for going to sea, he was perhaps inspired by his Uncle Brown Thurston, who had spent four years on board a whaling ship as a youth. His father wrote back on December 7, advising him against going to sea. By the next spring, however, Henry was again working for Marshall, who had increased his salary to $6.00 per week. As time went on, Marshall showed a growing fatherly interest in Henry and would occasionally write to his parents to reassure them concerning Henry's

health and welfare. Marshall's letters filled a void in Henry's correspondence, which his father criticized as infrequent and devoid of much real information.[136]

In 1856, Marshall was saddened by the death of his wife, Helen Peverly Marshall, and their newborn son. This tragedy apparently brought him closer to her brother, Thomas Everett Peverly, who was also a civil engineer, and the two began planning an engineering office in the West. About this time, William Hobart Hadley, a Unitarian Minister and Thomas Peverly's stepfather, moved from Portland to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as a city missionary. The news that Hadley sent back must have been good because Marshall soon became interested in business prospects in the Milwaukee area. He began to speak of going West in the fall or the winter, and Henry supposed he would go with him. Henry probably continued working with Marshall in Portland for the rest of the year. By December 12, 1856, Henry reported that Marshall had returned from an exploratory trip to Milwaukee, where he found prospects to be excellent. Henry's following letters show that he had joined him in Milwaukee by March 13, 1857.[137]

Chapter 5
Out West

Railroad to Adventure

On the cold New Hampshire morning of March 7, 1857, Henry set out on his adventure in the West. As adventures go, this one seemed relatively tame, because he was going only as far as Milwaukee, Wisconsin, by then a well-established city in a nine-year-old State. Before he left home, his professional mentor, A.P. Marshall, had assured him of employment as an engineering aide when he reached his destination. As secure as his immediate future seemed, the trip West was an adventure in itself. Henry started out over familiar roads with a friend whose carriage he had hired to carry him and his trunk the 15 miles from Goshen to the train station at Claremont, New Hampshire. After lunch, he caught the train down the Connecticut River Valley to Springfield, Massachusetts, the first leg of a complicated, thousand-mile journey across seven States and one Canadian Province.[1]

Traveling alone on the train to Springfield, Henry had time to imagine what might be in store for him in Milwaukee. He had every reason to be confident. His employer, A.P. Marshall, had been there and had brought back favorable news regarding the business climate, which seemed much more exciting than in old New England. Nearly everyone in Goshen and similar New Hampshire towns had neighbors or family members who had left to seek their fortunes in the West, and many had sent back glowing reports that fired the enthusiasm of further emigrants. Henry probably never read Horace Greeley's editorials in the *New York Tribune*, urging westward migration: "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country." Still, he was surely excited by the supposed opportunities that awaited ambitious young men in the West.[2]

Henry's arrival at Springfield interrupted his pleasant anticipations. He checked his trunk and proceeded to the home of his cousin, Sarah

Richardson Pease, and her husband, Austin. The next day was Sunday, which gave Henry time to get acquainted with Sarah and Austin's three children and to see his cousins Mabel Richardson, a spinster schoolteacher, and Ellen Hathaway and her husband, Rawson. These visits alternated with morning and evening church services, which Henry perhaps attended more out of family duty than personal devotion.[3]

While awaiting his next train on Monday morning, Henry "… went over to the "Water Shops" and saw them forge gun barrels. "[The] Government is making some vast improvements about these in the way of grading and building." He would have good reason to remember this visit a few years later because the Springfield Armory was already producing a prototype of the deadly accurate Springfield Rifle-Musket, which became the standard Federal infantryman's weapon of the Civil War. He arrived at the station in time to catch the noon train to Albany after buying a through ticket to Milwaukee for $24.95.[4]

Henry's train arrived late in Albany, causing him to miss his onward connection and thus condemning him to four hours of pedestrian tourism. He spent part of this time watching a session of the New York State legislature. Thirty years before, thanks to the political talent of Martin Van Buren, this stronghold of Jacksonian Democracy had become so powerful that contemporaries called it "The Albany Regency." Since then, Democratic hegemony had waned, and New York State had even gone Republican for Fremont in 1856. But Albany's reputation as a national power center was such that the legislature remained a magnet for political scientists of all stripes. Since Henry claimed to have no interest in politics, his visit to the legislature seems a curious way to have spent an evening. At least, it enabled him to keep warm while waiting.[5]

He boarded the night train that took him across New York and arrived in Rochester about 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday. In the early afternoon, his next train moved on across the suspension bridge above Niagara Falls and deposited him some 13 hours later at Windsor, Ontario, at about 1:00 a.m. This leg of his voyage was glacial, and the heat produced by the small stove in the middle of the car was imperceptible. From there, he took a ferry across to Detroit and yet another train to Chicago, where he arrived on Wednesday evening in time to check into a hotel.[6]

Henry was much refreshed after a good night's sleep, but Chicago in the light of day was his first huge disappointment in the West:

> As the train did not leave until half-past nine, I had some little time to walk about. I was going to say look about, but that you can't do—that is to any great extent, the whole city being "flat as a flounder" in fact a miserable, filthy, dirty swamp of a mud hole. I would not wish to live there on any account. I did not see it in its worst phase though for it was mostly frozen up, it being as cold as Labrador that morning. I believe that city to be a God-forsaken, Mammon-worshipping, Devil-serving, unchristian, abominable, filthy sink of iniquity in a most superlative degree.[7]

Chicago must have been a mess in March 1857. The city had been growing on marshy soil only a few feet above the level of Lake Michigan. By 1855, six successive years of cholera epidemics convinced city and State officials that they had to build a regular sewer system. Chief Engineer Ellis S. Chesbrough found the city's elevation so low that sewage would not drain adequately into the Chicago River. He persuaded the Board of Sewerage Commissioners to lay out the sewer pipes, as well as gas and water mains, above the existing streets. At the same time, they would dredge the Chicago River, and once the pipes were in place, they would use the dredgings to raise the grade level of the streets from six to ten feet throughout the city. Proprietors had to jack their buildings up to the new level or modify them so that an original upper floor became the new ground floor. This ambitious project had made Chicago even muddier than usual in 1857, but Henry did not stay long enough during this first visit to appreciate the objectives of the sewer project.[8]

Milwaukee

Henry arrived in Milwaukee early on Thursday afternoon, March 12, 1857. His first impressions of the city were much more favorable than those of Chicago. Milwaukee was built in a healthier location, elevated above Lake Michigan. Henry admired the universal building material, the handsome cream-colored brick of Milwaukee, which was a novelty to him. Milwaukee today is still full of handsome buildings that date from that era. After Chicago, he could even appreciate Milwaukee's plank sidewalks, which enabled him to minimize contact with the reddish-brown mud of the streets.[9]

Before exploring the city, however, he reported to work at the office of Marshall & Peverly, Civil Engineers and Surveyors, 19 Wisconsin Ave. Marshall had formed a partnership with Thomas Everett Peverly, the brother of his recently deceased wife. Marshall and Peverly were happy to see him, although surprised because Henry's letter announcing his arrival had not yet reached them. Nevertheless, they soon found plenty of work for him, office work at first, to Henry's regret. Marshall was concentrating on business development, but with disappointing results. Two months after his arrival, Henry confided to his parents that "Business don't increase as it might." Autumn brought the young company at least one interesting contract, the survey of the harbor at Kenosha, around 40 miles south of Milwaukee. This job brought Henry as much outdoor work as he wanted. By mid-November, the harbor had frozen over, which obliged the survey team to slide around on the ice to finish the project. There may have been smaller jobs, too, although Henry did not mention them.[10]

Henry was generally happy with life in Milwaukee during the first months of his stay. From the beginning, however, he had a few reservations that he reported in a long letter to his parents on May 2, 1857:

> This is a great country, this "out west" but I would not advise you to come here. Most of the people around these parts live by plunder. They make it a point to let no strangers escape with more than the skin of their teeth. It is on good authority that a man who has lived here long enough to be called a Western man (I did not learn his name) has been heard to say in good earnest that "if an Eastern man comes here with money or any other property, we are bound—by hook or crook to have it—or a part of it" and that is the "sense" of the community at large so far as I can learn. They get bitten and bite. It is believed by competent judges that there is not an honest man in this State or even a man that pretends to any sort of honesty, not even "thieves" honesty….
>
> Famous weather it is we have here, too. This is a beautiful day (!!!) but it is the first for a long time. It has been (humanly speaking) cold as Greenland most of the time since I have been here…. The weather is… treacherous to an almost incredible extent. In the morning it will perhaps be clear and mild and you might fancy that a pleasant warm agreeable day would follow—perhaps it will—and then again perhaps that confounded Lake (that is what

> is at the root of it all) will get up a small hurricane at short notice and smash up two or three dozen schooners and steamers and tear round and rip up things generally just as if they didn't cost anything. Then the next thing you know it snows or rains—then perhaps freezes and then throws and daubs things over with this beautiful red mud—next thing you know it is dry as a bone and dusty as you please. Indeed, of a truth, we can't tell what a day will bring forth….
>
> I am as well pleased with this place as I well could be. Not so much pleased with it as to desire to "settle down" here for "better or worse 'till death do us part, etc." In fact, I never saw or heard of the place where I would do that and I doubt if I ever shall….[11]

By Henry's account, Milwaukee had become one of the stereotypical Western boomtowns that countless Hollywood films recreated a century later. But Milwaukee had reached the peak of a speculative bubble that had been growing for several years. Wisconsin, whose farmers were producing one-sixth of the nation's wheat crop, had earned the title of "America's Breadbasket." To move the wheat to eastern markets, new railroad lines had stretched out from Milwaukee, reaching as far as the Mississippi by 1857. That same year, the city of Milwaukee completed a major expansion of its port, thereby facilitating transshipment across the Great Lakes.[12]

The optimism of the Milwaukee boomers knew no bounds. Henry noted that although the population was around 50,000, Milwaukee's founders had drawn the city limits wide enough to accommodate a million inhabitants. Henry's conclusions were prophetic:

> The way of it is everybody holds their land at the price they think it may be 10 or 15 years hence…. Undoubtedly it is a great country destined some day to be a—what's his name, but for all that, my impression is that a man with a family, who has anything to live upon, especially if he has a farm in the East had better stay where he is.[13]

Hard Times

Unfortunately for Milwaukee, including the firm of Marshall & Peverly, the nationwide boom was about to go bust. Economists disagree on the

underlying causes, but the economy had been softening since the end of the Crimean War (1854–56), and peace in Europe had decreased European demand for American grains and manufactured goods. Then, on August 24, 1857, the failure of the New York branch of the Ohio Life Insurance & Trust Company brought on the Panic of 1857, a rapid collapse of land speculation, and widespread railroad failures. The following recession lasted only two years, but that was more than enough to dash the hopes of Marshall & Peverly and their employees.[14]

According to Henry's letters home, the local economy declined gradually but inexorably:

> October 11, 1857: Money is tight here—Not any failures of account here as yet, but worse times expected.
>
> November 26, 1857: Money continues rather tight here but there have been no failures of any account here as yet. It is generally believed that this community may pass through the "crisis" with no serious damage.
>
> December 6, 1857: The "panic" hasn't hurt Milwaukee very seriously as yet. Business with us continues good and money scarce.
>
> December 27, 1857: The oldest inhabitants remark it to have been the dullest Christmas known to this place for many years. Nobody had any money. With regard to money, it is tighter than ever—Can't get enough to pay our liquor bills—hence we are obliged as usual to go dry—A.P. has some twelve hundred dollars owing to him, all of which will probably be good sometime, but never a cent of it can be got now.
>
> January 17, 1858: Money is as difficult to get and keep as usual, but it is of no use saying anything about that. "Hard times" is getting to be an old story—and we all get used to it just as eels get used to being skinned.[15]

Meanwhile, Henry's personal situation deteriorated as well. Soon after the recession began, Marshall informed Henry that he could no longer pay him a regular salary. As Henry described their conversation:

> The other day I had a talk with Marshall about various matters connected with himself and myself. His understanding seems to be that this year I am to work for my board and clothes and what

> I can get. For my part, I am satisfied. He further said that it was and had been his intention when his business became profitable to give me an interest in it, provided I wished it.[16]

Marshall's relationship with his former in-laws, the Hadleys, also complicated Henry's living conditions. The atmosphere in the Hadley home, where Henry had been boarding, became tense. Mr. Hadley's business as a commission agent in Milwaukee was not prospering, and the Hadley family leaned more and more on Marshall. Mr. Hadley soon reverted to his profession as a Unitarian clergyman by taking a post as a missionary at large in Chicago, where he began to spend most of his time. To reduce expenses, Marshall was trying to persuade the Hadleys to give up their lakeside house and move downtown. As a first step in that direction, Henry moved out of the Hadley home, set up sleeping quarters with another employee in Marshall & Peverly's back office, and took his meals in a nearby restaurant.[17]

According to Henry, the Hadley's, including Thomas Everett Peverly, who was Mrs. Hadley's son, were a moral as well as a financial drain on A.P. Marshall's limited resources:

> This partnership between Marshall & Peverly won't last long I think. My opinion is that A.P. is as disgusted with him and the rest of them as your humble servt., probably more so. Terrible times I expect to see when the separation comes—Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.[18]

And six months later, when the Hadleys finally did move, Henry wrote:

> Mr. Marshall and the Hadley family are moving downtown today. I had hoped that interesting family would leave for Chicago or the East. It would be good for my pocket if they would, that is, provided I stay here. If I must support any family, I think it better be my own.[19]

By mid-April, Henry had to admit to his parents that the outlook in Milwaukee was bleak. Marshall had been trying to improve their competitive position by establishing political contacts. He had, in fact, become a serious contender for the office of City Engineer, but when the City Council voted on the candidates, he received only one vote. This

was the setback that sealed the doom of Marshall's engineering office. With Spring weather at hand and no work in sight, Marshall had to make some hard choices. While awaiting that decision, Henry wrote:

> My prospects are no better than usual, and I don't see that they are likely to be for some time to come. The U.S. N[avy] still shares a considerable portion of my thoughts and attention, but I don't see where the money is to come from to get to Washington, even supposing that I was sure of an appointment, which I suppose would be by no means certain. Further than that—I don't know how I am to get out of town at all, and as for living here as I have lived for a year past, I shan't do it. If I was sure of getting a proper chance in a machine shop in N. York, Boston, Philadelphia or almost anywhere else, and had the wherewithal to get there, I should most assuredly go without 24 hours delay. I don't cast the least shadow of blame on A.P.M., and I know of nobody in whose employ I would rather be than his provided I could make a living by staying with him. But the fact is I can't afford to work for him for much less than for another person, and I have reason to believe that I could and can make more than my board and clothes (half clothed at that) in some other place or position. It is possible that I overrate myself, but I certainly shall never know until I try it, and therefore I intend to try it, even if I have to go to shoveling dirt on a R.R. But I hardly believe I shall come to that for some time, and I can't bring myself to believe that I shall ever starve to death, and so I don't give myself much trouble.[20]

Chicago

Finally, Henry did not have to shovel dirt on a railroad in order to get out of Milwaukee, but he did have to take a job that was almost as demeaning. It was Marshall who found the solution by accepting an offer to work for the Chicago Sewerage Commission for $100 per month, taking Henry with him as a rodman at $40 per month. The sewer project had advanced remarkably since Henry's earlier visit, but there was still plenty of work to do:

> My work is not of the most desirable description. It principally consists of crawling about on all fours under gas and water pipes

> and driving stakes in muddy ditches. But I hope to live through it. In respectability, it is about on a par with chimney sweeping.[21]

The very idea of moving to Chicago must also have been humiliating for Henry, who had exclaimed a year before that he would not wish to live there "on any account." Nevertheless, he made the best of the situation and found comfortable lodgings in a boarding house, from which he continued his faithful weekly correspondence homeward:

> I believe in my last I mentioned that I was not very much in love with my occupation, and at present my views have not changed very much. But I suppose the best thing I can do is to keep at it for a few months and endeavor to practice economy enough to get away from here or to get a few clothes at least. I never was favorable to starving or to perishing by over exertion, and I hardly think I shall do either here.[22]

In July, relations between Henry and A.P. Marshall turned colder. Before leaving Milwaukee, Henry had been accepted to sit for an examination as a Navy engineer in New York. When he asked Marshall to advance him the funds to get there, Marshall maintained that he could not get the money. Henry felt Marshall had not tried very hard to help him, considering that he had worked for him for more than a year in return for little more than food, lodging, and pocket money. In the future, Henry would place less confidence in Marshall's promises and keep his options open.[23]

Henry knew that his job with the Sewerage Commission would not last through the winter because sewer work would slow down or shut down as winter weather approached. He assured his parents that he had several survival plans, but had to admit that none of them was very practicable: "My trust is mostly reposed in Providence, and a good, hard, tough pair of omnific hands." Although forewarned and nonchalant, Henry must have felt that feeling of free-fall, when he was discharged without advance notice in mid-October 1858.[24]

A Country School Master

Two weeks later, however, Henry had landed on his feet. Since civil engineering work in northern climes is notoriously seasonal, especially

in the depths of a recession, he had to make a temporary professional detour. He told his parents that he left his winter fate to chance by taking the train as far as his limited funds could carry him, which turned out to be Freeport, Illinois, around 120 miles west of Chicago. In Freeport, he found an opening for a schoolmaster at a crossroads called Florence, about eight miles to the south. He then set out on foot to Florence, where he secured the post, thus assuring his survival through the three-month school term. This story is almost too good to be true, which suggests that Henry romanticized it for his parents' benefit. Surely, Henry had made at least preliminary inquiries about employment around Freeport. Otherwise, why would he head haphazardly westward in a direction opposite to his ultimate destination in the East?[25]

In any event, Henry's teaching job assured him of good food, warmth, and shelter through the worst of the winter in the home of a local farmer, Mr. Amos Washburn. He was pleased with his new accommodation, which included a room to himself and excellent meals. His host family, including Mrs. Washburn, two sons, and a daughter, may not have provided the most stimulating companionship, as they were busy with an endless round of farm chores. This left Henry free to prepare his lesson plans and polish his epistolary skills.[26]

During this winter, Henry paid more attention to perfecting the letters he wrote to his parents. Although he had little opportunity to advance his engineering career during his two years in the West, he did show marked progress as a writer. For him, correspondence provided the opportunity to concoct a story, to give his impressions of persons and places, or to write a brief essay or humorous sketch. He was never content to give a simple account of the week's or fortnight's events, which he found too boring to write about. He also knew that if he gave his parents too many real-life details during this difficult period, he might alarm them about his financial or moral condition.

Perhaps Henry even envisioned a career as a writer. This would help explain his detour into teaching, which is more like a literary profession than engineering. About this time, he also expressed his admiration for his ancestor, Roger Wolcott, colonial Governor of Connecticut and the first person to have published a work of poetry in the American colonies. (See Chapter 3.) Indeed, this "Renaissance man," who had also proven his talents as a statesman, a military commander, and a theologian, continued to be a role model for Henry for some years thereafter.

If Henry imagined that school teaching might offer a pathway toward a writing career, he was soon disillusioned:

> It seems to be demonstrated to my eternal satisfaction that teaching is not my element…. I suppose you all know something about school teaching, and of the thousand petty troubles that make up the sum of a teacher's existence. You know the disgusting sound of the snuffling and hawking, the pencil-sharpening and the feet-scraping; you know the horror of the stench—a cross between that of a charnel house and a barn-yard that salutes the nostril unblessed with a cold, in a small, hot room, full of children of soiled exteriors and the still more filthy imaginations; you know how sickening to the sight are the dirty noses, the slimy coat sleeves, the filthy practices and vacant expressions never absent from a schoolroom; undoubtedly you know something about them all, and so I won't trouble you and sicken you by further remarks thereon.[27]

Upon reading the above, the senior Richardsons apparently panicked, imagining their younger son on the verge of a profound depression. Henry had to correct their thinking a few weeks later:

> No doubt you are laboring under quite a mistaken conception as to my disgust for my present vocation. You know I am apt to exaggerate; indeed, in my striving after effect, I am exceedingly prone to load on such a superabundance of grotesque embellishment, and tawdry ornament as to render the few slender supports of truth I may have difficult of recognizance, if not utterly invisible. Probably some such exaggerated form of expression in some epistle of mine has induced you to believe that I am dragging out my days in a condition of hypochondriac slavery. Nothing could be further from the truth.[28]

A month later, the end of the school term not only freed our young hero from his "condition of slavery" but also provided him with the funds necessary to return to the East. He was not in such a hurry, however, that he would ignore the invitation of his Aunt Lizzie and her husband. Elizabeth Thurston, his mother's younger sister, had married Charles Philbrook and settled in Adrian, Michigan, where they were

raising two children, Ella and Francis. From Adrian, Henry wrote to his parents that he was thinking about going to New York City to work with A.P. Marshall on the Central Park project. Adrian is about 70 miles southwest of Detroit on the return route through Albany, where he would have to choose between a new adventure in New York City or the comfort of home. Chances are that he chose comfort because the archives hold no further letters from Henry during the next four months.[29]

Religion and Philosophy

Henry's voluminous correspondence at this crucial point in his life should give us some insight into his maturing worldview. He usually tried to avoid serious matters, but his father considered it his duty to press his son on such subjects as his religious faith and alcoholism. His father's letters contained continual calls to rejoin the faith, the most serious of which was the following, written in 1856:

> [T]he lives of my dear children are also uncertain, and as I have no evidence that they are prepared to die, it would seem very reasonable that I should desire above all things, that they may become the subjects of that great change without which it is impossible for them to enter heaven. Will you not, my dear son, attend without delay and in earnest to this great subject.[30]

In another letter, his father had asked him to sign a temperance pledge, and Henry replied:[31]

> I will endeavor on this occasion to give you my real theory on the subject, and furthermore I will try and remember what it is so that I may be able at all and any future times and occasions whatsoever to prove it and uphold it. It may be stated as follows—Alcohol is a good servant, but a bad master. And it may be thus illustrated: Of all that innumerable throng, who in the vain self-confidence and fancied security of youth have imbibed their occasional "Gin-slings" or "Brandy-cocktails," trusting in themselves that they had power to say "thus far shalt thou come and no further"—that they should cast off the habit of tippling—even as they would cast off a garment, how few, Alas! there be that will believe they one day will fill a drunkard's grave, and then and

> there realize the awful and solemn assertion of Holy writ, that "no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."[32]

In the same exchange of correspondence, the anxious father also asked—certainly not for the first time—what his son actually believed in, to which Henry replied:

> As regards my creed, when it is completed you shall have a copy in full. Suffice it for the present, to say that—I believe in the Triune Deity, in Election, in close communion, in Peda Baptism, in Immaculate Conception, in Predestination, in Transubstantiation, in Presbyterianism, in the Decalogue, the Pater Noster, and the Songs of Solomon—Amen.[33]

It was clear, however, from the overall tone of Henry's correspondence that he believed in few of these orthodox doctrines.

Despite the gentle mockery of Henry's usual replies, his father did not seem discouraged and continued to send his regular mini-sermons, at least until Henry's 21st birthday on August 23, 1858, after which they seemed to taper off. Henry could be serious, as he was when he wrote the following:

> I am not inclined to enter into a controversy with anybody, particularly not with my father, on religious subjects, and therefore I shall refrain from replying to father's remarks…. My creed is every man for himself and—for us all. Nobody is authorized to dictate to any other individual what he shall or shall not believe, particularly in matters of speculation, which are not susceptible of logical demonstration or evident to the senses; though I will not say that it is not every man's duty, provided he believes it to be his duty, to try to convince every man that does not believe as he does of his error. Indeed, I think it is his duty so to do, for I am convinced that whatever a man believes to be right or true, that same is right and true so far as that man is concerned.[34]

In this ongoing correspondence with his father, Henry seems to be telling him tactfully that, as much as he appreciated his efforts to guide him along the narrow path, it was now time for his elder to step aside and let him find his own way. At this time in his life, Henry's "own way"

seems to have been very close to that of the Transcendentalists. His statement of his creed might have been inspired by reading the essay, "Self-Reliance," that Emerson wrote about the time Henry was born. Compare the following from Emerson's first page to Henry's creed:

> To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men—that is genius.[35]

Henry was certainly not an orthodox Christian. This can be inferred from the general tone of his correspondence and from his consistent refusal to capitalize the words "christian" or "orthodox congregational church" when writing to his family. Nor was he an atheist. He frequently, if not regularly, attended church services, although he did not restrict himself to the Congregational denomination. Perhaps the clearest evidence of his belief was his frequent use of the word "Providence," which he always capitalized, leading the reader to believe he was referring to a deity rather than to some beneficent but impersonal fate. Despite his father's persistent invitations, however, he never seems to have made the Christian leap of faith.

Politics

Nor did Henry's elders succeed in indoctrinating him with their political views. His grandfather, at least two of his uncles, and his father ardently opposed slavery, whereas Henry was not an abolitionist. Not even Emerson nor the other anti-slavery Transcendentalists were able to convince him on this issue. At this time of his life, Henry's correspondence reflects a consistently critical approach to nearly any sort of conventional wisdom or popular opinion.

If Henry's skepticism were the expression of some late adolescent revolt against the ideas of his elders, he would certainly have been willing, even eager, to espouse political views contrary to theirs. Instead, he avoided the subject, pretending disinterest:

> Political matters, as you know, are entirely uninteresting to me, and therefore I can say nothing about them; and inasmuch as they form almost the only news of the day, you must be content to go without any news from me, that is "news" in the popular acceptation of the term. Truly, I occasionally give vent (i.e. publicity) to a

> new theory or opinion; but the world doesn't appreciate it, and so far from calling it news, they denominate it an "old-fogyism." But such is the fate of reformers, in every age; they are always old-fogies or fanatics—I am resigned.[36]

Perhaps Henry's refusal to comment on political events was simply a means to avoid useless controversy with his father. Henry must have had some opinion regarding events considered to have been of momentous importance. While Henry was out West, hardly a week went by without newspaper headlines that would be inscribed in the history books to mark the events that led inexorably to the Civil War.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had been the basis of an uneasy truce between North and South. These measures provided that Maine would be admitted to the Union as a free State and Missouri as a slave State, but that slavery would be excluded from the rest of the Missouri Territory north of latitude 36° 30'. The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 repealed the Missouri Compromise, divided the area into the Kansas Territory south of the 40th parallel and the Nebraska Territory to the north, opened both territories to settlement, and provided that the citizens of each territory would decide whether it would be slave or free. This last provision set off a competition between proponents and opponents of slavery to determine which side could maintain the most settlers in Kansas. The intermittent and often bloody civil disturbances that this contest provoked were still sputtering when Henry set out for the West and did not end until the Marais des Cygnes River confrontation of May 19, 1858.

In March 1857, when Henry began his new job in Milwaukee, the Supreme Court issued the Dred Scott decision. Dred Scott was a slave who had sued for his freedom, claiming that his long residence with his master in a free Territory had ended his condition of slavery. The pro-slavery Supreme Court ruled that no slave or descendant of a slave could ever be a citizen, and, therefore, he could not sue in a Federal Court. The Court also declared the Missouri Compromise to be unconstitutional, arguing that Congress had no right to restrict slavery in the Territories. The unnecessarily sweeping nature of this decision led Northerners to fear that an increasingly aggressive South was trying to extend slavery to the entire Nation.

Neither the conflicts in Kansas nor the Dred Scott decision elicited any comment from Henry. However, he made a passing reference to the

Senatorial election campaign, which pitted Abraham Lincoln against incumbent Senator Stephen A. Douglas. “I suppose I might write about the weather,” he began coyly, “or about Douglas’s reception and speech, but I shan’t.”[37]

Henry was referring to Douglas's speech of July 9, 1858, from the balcony of the Tremont Hotel in Chicago, in which he said:

> I am free to say to you that in my opinion this government of ours is founded on the white basis. It was made by the white man, for the benefit of the white man, to be administered by white men, in such manner as they should determine.[38]

Henry did not mention Abraham Lincoln's response the following day:

> I should like to know if taking this old Declaration of Independence, which declares that all men are equal upon principle and making exceptions to it where will it stop. If one man says it does not mean a negro, why not another say it does not mean some other man? If that declaration is not the truth, let us get the Statute book, in which we find it and tear it out! Who is so bold as to do it! [Voices—"me" "no one," &c.] If it is not true let us tear it out! [cries of "no, no,"] let us stick to it then, [cheers] let us stand firmly by it then. [Applause.][39]

This exchange was only the prelude to the series of seven Lincoln-Douglas debates, which took place between August 21 and October 15, 1858. Henry made no reference to these, but it could be more than a coincidence that Henry found his job as a schoolmaster near Freeport, Illinois, the prairie town that was the site of the second debate. Although this encounter took place on Friday, August 27, 1858, while Henry was supposed to be working for the Sewer Commission, he could have taken the day off and gone to Freeport, which was less than 120 miles from Chicago by direct rail line. During this debate, Douglas took a stand that came to be known as the Freeport Doctrine. Lincoln had asked whether the people of a Territory could "… in any lawful way, against the wishes of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from their limits prior to the formation of a State Constitution." Douglas replied in part:

> It matters not what way the Supreme Court may hereafter decide as to the abstract question whether slavery may or may not go into a Territory under the Constitution; the people have the lawful means to introduce it or exclude it as they please, for the reason that slavery cannot exist a day or an hour anywhere, unless it is supported by local police regulations.[40]

Thus, Douglas, who had long favored the regulation of slavery by popular sovereignty, maintained that position despite the Dred Scott decision. Henry's ideas on the question of slavery, as he would express them some years later, were very close to the stand that Douglas took during the Quincy debate:

> If each state will only agree to mind its own business, and let its neighbors alone,… this republic can exist forever divided into free and slave states, as our fathers made it and the people of each state have decided.[41]

Whether or not Henry attended any of these encounters, he surely read about them in the newspapers. Despite his professed lack of interest in politics, the Lincoln-Douglas debates would surely have drawn him closer to the Democratic Party, especially to the wing led by Stephen A. Douglas.

During his two years in the West, although Henry wrote nothing about his political views and very little about his religious beliefs, he kept his parents fairly well informed about the major events in his life. Before he left Michigan, he wrote that he had gained eight or nine pounds, bringing his weight to 147 pounds, which did not suggest any major change in his appearance.[42]

Henry Brown Richardson, about 1859.

When he finally arrived home at the end of the winter in 1859, he treated his parents to at least one surprise: he had grown a mustache. This new facial hair was visual evidence that he had reached his majority on August 23 the previous year. As for appearance, it seemed to fit well with his face and character. At any rate, he was wearing a similar one when photographed 50 years later, so it must have pleased him. On

Henry's 21-year-old face, however, its slightly drooping shape lent him a somewhat ironic expression, perfectly in character with the humorous sketches that so often appeared in his letters. This ironic sense of humor had never turned to sarcasm, suggesting that his outlook on life remained positive despite the professional disappointments that shadowed his Western adventure. There must have been times, however, when he found his situation profoundly depressing. At those times, he could fall back on those more basic elements of character—resilience, resourcefulness, and self-reliance in the Emersonian as well as the ordinary sense. These resources enabled him to work his way out of the difficult circumstances in which "Providence" had placed him. At home in Goshen, he would have some time to digest his experiences in the relative comfort and security of his family. In a few months, he would again go out in the world with renewed self-confidence, ready for more successful and eventually more perilous adventures.

Chapter 6
The Best of Times

After a month or two at home in Goshen, Henry went out again into the world with good humor and confidence intact. He set out on foot from Goshen at the end of May, headed for Bennington, Vermont, a distance of about 90 miles. He arrived at Bellows Falls, Vermont, two days later, having covered nearly 30 miles on foot. Then he completely changed his plans and took the train to Northampton, Massachusetts.[1]

> I suppose it is a matter of common belief that I am an indefatigable pedestrian—at least, I am fully persuaded of it myself. It is also well authenticated that I have "learned the lesson of self-reliance," and am not to be conquered or turned back by trifles, or, indeed, by anything save a direct "dispensation of Providence;" that having once put my hand to the plow, I don't look back, but keep right on plowing—usually, however, in a circumgyratory manner, so as at last, by means of a compound curve, to come back to the old starting place. This is to say, I never allow the promptings of a depraved Nature to get the mastery over Conscience and Reason; I think nine times before I act, and never move till I am sure I am in the right direction. But, should my nine-fold thought prove, after all, to have been an erroneous one, I don't right-about-face, and ignominiously retreat, or dodge off at acute angles; I just keep right on, with a bold front and flying colors, but nevertheless swerve a little, and then a little more, and so get back as becomes a gentleman, without any unbecoming haste or disorder, having, apparently, kept straight forward, and adhered rigidly to "first principles." It is a good trick, and one that I learned of my father—not my "father, the Devil" as you would perhaps suppose, but my father in the flesh.

> But by some means it happened yesterday that I didn't act with my usual straightforwardness. I did retreat from the march toward Bennington, and hid myself in the shadow of Mount Holyoke; I made an acute angle in my course at Bellows Falls, and took railroad for Northampton. The fact was when I got to Bellows Falls, like the Prophet Ezekiel, I had a vision of wheels, and was lifted up in the body, and whithersoever the wheels went, thither I went also; and the wheels turned as they went, but as for me, I turned not. And the wheels were round.[2]

Hockanum

From Northampton, it was only three or four miles to the ferry across the Connecticut River to Hockanum, where his Uncle William and Aunt Lucy received him warmly. Henry's original plan was to check out a job opening with a Bennington company working on the nearby Hoosac Tunnel. Work had begun on this railroad tunnel in 1851 and was proceeding by fits and starts through the Hoosac Range between North Adams and Florida, Massachusetts, a distance of 4.75 miles. The project was suspended during the Civil War but was completed in 1873. The Hoosac Tunnel was then the longest in North America, and the second longest in the world. Henry was either wise or lucky to have avoided this project because casualties were high among the workers due to problems in handling the nitroglycerine used for blasting.[3]

He had not completely abandoned the Hoosac option when he wrote to his parents on his arrival in Hockanum:

> I have three great plans of operation for the future: first, to skulk about to Hoosac, etc. and trust to Providence; second, to go to Boston and trust to Luck; third, to stay here and trust to William. If I knew that John Deane would like to come here and work this summer for what he could get, I would abandon my third plan in his favor. I suppose that W. would like to have him here if I don't conclude to stay with him awhile, and I am sure I don't know what to think about it. If Johnny wanted to come, and I knew it, I wouldn't think of staying; indeed I don't, really, as it is.[4]

As far as William Richardson was concerned, Henry's arrival was perfectly timed as he was still in need of a nephew or two to help him

with the work around the farm. Lucy's nephew Irving Clark had been living and working with them for several years, but William could still use another hand to help with the heavy spring workload. Henry was not enthusiastic about committing himself to a season of farming. He may have had reservations about the Hoosac Tunnel. Still, he was serious about finding work in his chosen profession, and spring was the right time to present himself to prospective employers. He could not afford to lose too much time during the height of the construction season.[5]

Family solidarity won out temporarily, and Henry stayed on at Hockanum until the beginning of July. Despite his independent streak, Henry knew how much he and his parents owed to the family safety net. It was family support that had enabled him to continue his education and begin his career as an engineer. During his schooling and apprenticeship in Portland, Maine, his Uncle Brown Thurston had lodged and boarded Henry for several years. After the death of Brown's first wife in 1858, Henry and Eunice Richardson took care of his three or four youngest children for several months, but Henry still felt indebted to his uncle. Another uncle, Melvin Deane, apparently gave him a good start in the engineering profession. After Deane's death, his widow went to live with Henry's parents, probably to help care for her sister, Henry's mother, who was struck by a serious illness in 1854. This arrangement seemed to suit all concerned because Aunt Harriet stayed on with the Richardsons long after Eunice Richardson had recovered her health. Harriet brought to the household her infant daughter, Ada, and her stepson, John Deane. John was 14 in 1859, old enough to be helpful around William's farm. Whether or not John accepted his suggestion for employment, Henry had at least made an effort to find a replacement.[6]

Henry made a good impression on his young Hokanum cousins. By 1859, the older girls had all left the family nest, and most were living in Springfield. Sarah was married, Harriet and Lucy were teaching school, and Mabel was living with their cousin, Ellen Richardson Hathaway. That left Abby, then 14 years old, and Mary, 10, still with their parents in Hockanum. According to Henry, "Abby is grown to a size usually denominated as 'a young lady.' She is really a very pretty girl, and I may say the same of Mary."[7]

Henry would entertain the girls by writing poetry of the following sort:

> Uncle Hezekiah Perkins, his legs were very crooked.
> A bull came from the barnyard and most terribly he
> hooked.

Abby also remembered him for inventing "… the 'hen persuader,' a pair of small sticks tied on behind the hen's legs so that when she reached forward to scratch, the sticks would set into the ground and just walk her right out of her mother's garden." On the other hand, Henry and Irving Clark never became close friends, if one can judge by Irving's wartime sentiments. In 1862, when serving in the 27th Massachusetts Volunteers, he wrote to Mabel that if he came across Henry, he "… would shoot him as quick as any other rebel."[8]

Boston

Henry decided to go to Boston and left the farm at the beginning of July. After celebrating the Fourth with his Springfield cousins, he showed up at his brother John's lodgings in the suburb of Harrison Square (now better known as Clam Point) in Dorchester on July 5. Within two days, he had already found work with a firm of engineers in Boston.

> Yesterday I made merry with your "very son," but today I have faced the stern realities of life, and by dint of much bragger-faced-ness, found, at last, a place where I may get somewhat wherewith to sustain an unprofitable existence; namely, a situation as a draughtsman, in the office of Shedd & Edson, Civil Eng'rs., State St., Boston. I am merely on trial and it is not unlikely that I may be turned off after a day or two.[9]

Shedd & Edson soon found that Henry's work as a draughtsman was satisfactory and confirmed his employment, at least through the summer, at a wage of $2.00 per eight-hour day. By the end of the summer, they decided his work was more than satisfactory and sent him into the field as "… engineer-in-chief in all but name on the Brookline Horse Rail Road." This new role kept him outside most of the time, which he greatly preferred, and kept him extremely busy, a welcome change after his enforced idleness in the West.[10]

Meanwhile, his brother, John, was wrapping up a temporary assignment in Dorchester, where he had gone to work the year before. John left town at the end of August, apparently to return to Portland. Henry then had no reason to stay out in Dorchester, which was a pleasant suburb but quite far from his work. The Harrison Square station of the Old Colony Railroad line was close to his lodgings, but once he arrived at the Kneeland Street station in South Boston, he was still nearly a mile from Shedd & Edson's offices. Normally, he could walk there through the business district in about 15 minutes unless bad weather forced him to take a horse-drawn streetcar. In any case, for a young bachelor like Henry, the attractions of city life would easily outweigh those of the bucolic suburbs, and he began looking for new lodgings closer to his work. A month later, he wrote that he was boarding downtown at 54 Summer Street (now just two blocks south of Filene's), where he shared a small third-floor room with a friend of John's.[11]

One sign of Henry's success was that he kept working through the winter. In previous years, he had either faced wage cuts or found himself unemployed when bad weather arrived. However, in the winter of 1860, he assured his parents that he had plenty of work in Boston. He was so busy that his letters became shorter and less frequent over time. He no longer had time to write the long, fanciful sketches that had filled his winter weekends during his two years in the West. This suggests he was just as busy during his free time as he was during work hours. By February, he had moved again, this time to 13 Cornhill, a short street that disappeared a century later during the Government Center development. That placed him even closer to Shedd & Edson's offices. He was also near Scollay Square, which, at that time, was in the heart of Boston's fashionable theater and hotel district. This was long before the area became famous—or infamous—for its tassel-twirling strippers; even so, Henry's letters to his parents never mentioned anything about Boston nightlife.[12]

Indeed, the country had recovered rapidly from the Panic of 1857, and "Providence" treated Henry much better in Boston than it had out West. As 1859 began, he had a responsible and promising job and reasonably comfortable lodgings near the center of Boston's social and cultural life. Perhaps it was time to settle down. Certainly, that is what his parents were thinking, and they may have considered it a hopeful sign when Henry asked his mother to make him a dozen shirts. Nearly three years had passed since he had written, "I never saw or heard of the

place where I would [settle down], and I doubt if I ever shall," and good fortune might have changed his outlook. But Henry's new shirts were more likely a sign that he was getting ready for his next long voyage. Before returning from Illinois, he had dreamed of seeing St. Louis, Cincinnati, New Orleans, and Charleston, and only a shortage of funds had kept him from turning these dreams into action. By now, however, he had probably accumulated enough savings that he could think about moving on.[13]

In those days, only the wealthy could practice tourism for tourism's sake, so Henry would need to find work to sustain himself when he reached his destination. This was one reason he kept in touch with his previous employer and long-time mentor, A.P. Marshall. As early as July 1858, he had heard that Marshall had received a "great contract" to build levees along the Mississippi. Henry's archived letters contain nothing about his negotiations with Marshall, but it is reasonable to assume that they agreed to work together on the levee project. Years later, one of Henry's obituaries read: "He superintended the building of the big Marshall levee just north of St. Joseph." Henry seems to have kept his parents in the dark until the last minute about his plans to move to Louisiana. During his stay in the West, he had realized how much his parents worried about him. After the Milwaukee debacle, he would avoid telling his parents about any impending change in his life until all the details had been worked out and he could present the new situation in the most favorable light. He preferred to present such projects to his parents in person, so as to better deal with any objections they might raise. Therefore, he probably made a brief visit to Goshen before he headed south.[14]

Louisiana

Henry must have gone to Louisiana toward the end of March 1860. By mid-April, he already had an address in St. Joseph, Tensas Parish, where his father was able to write to him:

> If you are no more an abolitionist at the South than you have been at the North it seems quite certain that if any ill treatment should accrue to you on that ground you would suffer wrongfully.[15]

The Reverend Henry Richardson had good reason to be concerned about his son's safety in the South. After John Brown attacked the Federal Armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, the entire slave-owning South seemed overwhelmed by some collective paranoia. Brown's trial brought forth evidence that several northern abolitionists had supported him. Southerners became convinced that there was a widespread conspiracy in the North to incite slave rebellions of the sort that Brown had planned. Thereafter, informed Northerners such as the senior Richardsons began reading newspaper accounts of imprudent Northerners who were being run out of southern towns, tarred and feathered, or otherwise mistreated. Since Henry had no sympathy with "abolitionism," and because he was working with A.P. Marshall on a project of importance to the parish, he received greater consideration than the ordinary Yankee stranger. During his first two months in St. Joseph, he was probably too busy to write any letters worth saving. Indeed, he and Marshall had to hustle to get any work done before the spring high water. [16]

When Henry found time to write early in June, the hot weather had already set in, and he was having difficulty getting used to it:

> I am convinced that Adam when driven out of Paradise was sent to Tensas Parish, Louisiana. Of this startling proposition – which I fancy is to raise a prodigious cloud of tobacco smoke among the German theologians, and crack the dry bones of Zion in every quarter of the evangelized world—I have abundant proof. But that which drives home the conclusion beyond all controversy is the fact that Adam was told that henceforth he would earn his bread by the sweat of his brow.… In brief, it is hot—about 95°, I think, and no air stirring. I sweat so fearfully that I fear my skin may become a mere network, and that I shall perspire some of my vital organs through the enlarged meshes. My present condition is that of a sort of living cullender (sic), letting through all the humors, and only retaining the insoluble solids. Streams of the most sensible—not to say scented—perspiration go coursing down my brow, my cheeks, my back, my limbs; drop from my nose, my chin, my hair; greasing and soiling whatever I touch, and whatever touches me, so that I may cry with the prophet or whoever it was "unclean, unclean!"[17]

Henry was then staying at the St. Joseph Hotel. He was one of a dozen lodgers, all men from 22 to 30 years old, of whom four others were of northern origin. There were two engineers, a surveyor, two physicians, three lawyers, and several local government employees of varying descriptions. Although the hotel's accommodations were rudimentary, the proprietor was thoughtful enough to have provided a "grog shop" and billiard tables for the entertainment of his clients and their friends.[18]

One of the first persons Henry met at the hotel was Charles B. Tenney, another young bachelor engineer. Tenney, a recent arrival from Fayette, Mississippi, had already established a surveying business in the parish. He was well thought of locally, and in April 1860, the Tensas Parish Police Jury (the equivalent of a county board of supervisors in other states) appointed him to be Levee Inspector. Henry was surprised to discover that this new friend, who seemed a thorough Southerner, actually had New England roots. Both were even more surprised that they each had relatives in Methuen, Massachusetts. They also had similar religious backgrounds; Tenney's father had been a founding elder of the Presbyterian Church in Thibodaux, Louisiana, and director of young ladies' seminaries in several cities of the deep South. The two got along quite well, and Tenney must have persuaded Henry to stay on in St. Joseph and work with him after he had finished with Marshall's levee project. Tenney had all the business he could handle, and the booming cotton economy led them to believe that even greater opportunities lay ahead. The Panic of 1857 had hardly affected the South, which bolstered Southerners' conviction that their economic system was intrinsically superior to that of the North. It was easy for Henry to reach the same conclusion after his disappointing years in the West. Henry's available letters shed no light on when and how Henry severed relations with Marshall and partnered with Tenney. He no doubt preferred to explain his plans to his parents in person, which he was able to do during a trip to the North in September 1860.[19]

When Henry returned to St. Joseph early in October, he found the weather considerably cooler and more agreeable. Soon, the social season was in full swing, and Henry had already made enough acquaintances that he received an invitation. This must have been the first party that Henry attended in St. Joseph, and the event so marked him that he took the time to describe it in detail to his parents in a letter that deserves to be quoted in full:

Dear Parents:

For several weeks I haven't been able to move the spirit enough to move me sufficiently to write to anybody, and I assure you I don't feel any symptoms of a "special call" on the present occasion. Therefore you must expect little more than the general formalities and compliments.

My health is good, my conscience calm, and I wish you every good. That I believe comprises all I really have to say. Nevertheless I shall feel it my duty to make a few remarks, simply to occupy the time.

Probably I can cover my paper as easily as any way by telling you about my first appearance in Tensas society, which occurred two or three evenings since at the house of a young gentleman, resident here for some years, but who has been in his own house only a short time. My modesty was such that added to the fact of my having no suitable boots I had almost concluded not to go, but at length I mustered courage (and strength) sufficient to put on some patent leathers of Tenney's (only three sizes too small for me) and proceed to the scene of festivity. At the door, the mother of the young gent who gave the entertainment (he isn't married) met me; and although I had been presented on a former occasion I found it advisable to re-introduce myself—which you must imagine done with infinite grace and politeness—H.R.H. (myself) was immediately ushered into a room appropriated to gentlemen, where he found a few acquaintances, a place for his hat, and a sideboard plentifully furnished with amply filled decanters, and sparkling glasses. To his credit with the members of "The Delicate Gastric Association", be it said, that he slighted and for the time being, avoided the latter token of hospitality. Presently, Mr. C. (the host) meets him and says "Glad to see you Richardson. Let me take you into the parlor and introduce you to a partner."—"Thank you" says H.R.H. "but unfortunately, I don't dance"—"The Dickens you don't!" says C.—"But" says HRH, "nothing could afford me greater pleasure than to be taken into the parlor and presented to the ladies." Albeit, HRH was trembling in his tight boots all the while, and thinking whether his cravat was tied, his pantaloons buttoned up, or his finger-nails clean, and whether it was proper to say 'Good evening,' 'How d'you do.' Happy to meet you' or what not, and all the while

endeavoring to look unconcerned and assume his most interesting expression.

But while these pleasant thoughts are occupying his mind, he is being conducted to the parlor, where all his fine speeches are forgotten when C. says "Miss A. let me introduce to you Mr. R.—Miss B. Mr. R." and so on to Miss C. D. E. etc. However H.R.H. has sufficient presence of mind to bow low, make an inarticulate murmur of pleasure, and to screw his labials into what he fancies their most fascinating smile. Thus he "runs a-muck" half round the room, and at length finds an uneasy seat in front of two or three young ladies, one of whom is so handsome, has such killing eyes, and looks withal so much as if she were enjoying the evident confusion of the bashful Joseph, that H.R.H.'s poor brain is in more of a whirl than ever, and he has doubts whether he sits on his coat-tails or stands on his head, and his tongue is as securely bridled as though he wore a twisted bit, curb-rein, and martingales, instead of a thread-bare coat, and badly mangled collar. But before a very long time elapsed, he has collected sufficient thoughts to resolve, as it were, to "carry the war into Africa". So he commences on the beauty herself with some pleasing simplicity about the weather or something of that sort. She smiles and displays teeth equal to the greatest triumphs of the dental art, fixes her eyes in a manner utterly irresistible for H.R.H. (and I should suppose to stronger-nerved men than he) assents to his remark, adds another equally simple and sensible. —H.R.H. feels pleased and proud of his success in small talk, and turns to try it on another lady. He does almost as well as before, and begins to sit easier, and to find less difficulty in disposing of his hands.

Squeak snap! Go the fiddles. In comes the bravery of Tensas and drags away the fair circle about H.R.H. and he is alone. A few ladies remain in the room and one or two gentlemen; but he knows none of them, so he goes out to see the dancing. It is a pleasing sight. Two negro fiddlers—their eyes rolling and their heads swaying—saw the feline bowels in sweet but stirring harmony. Brave men and fair women "whirl about and turn about and do just so "passing over and crossing back, advancing, retreating, circling through the mazes of all the incomprehensible figures that Euclid has not described nor your humble servant

trodden—some with all their might, as though the scriptural injunction referred to the foot instead of the hand, others walking as though their dignity and their corns were suffering martyrdom, and yet others doing it gracefully, rationally, and in a manner "good for sore eyes" as our Irish friends are said to say.

But I am becoming too minute and exhausting stationery to a fearful extent. Therefore to make short work of it let me say that H.R.H. gazes for some time, goes to the parlor again, then back to see the dancing and to "look unutterable things," getting now and then an introduction and an opportunity to whisper a few soft syllables, his boots all the while getting more uncomfortable, and himself more full of regrets that he can't dance. Eventually the gentlemen are requested to take the ladies out to supper, which is amply spread on the verandah in front of the house, a novel idea to me & I think a good one. Crooking his arm to the angle of ninety degrees he solicits the favor of a lady's hand in his elbow. It is granted and they grandly march to the table. Here the gentlemen are expected to be attentive to the fairer sex and refrain from eating themselves, only drinking a little wine. The ladies being filled, and some of them chilled also, the reverse movement to the parlor occurs. H.R.H. deposits his charge in the easiest chair he can find, begs her pardon for being unable to get near enough to her to attend to her wants as he ought, etc. etc. and leaves her to the society of her own sex, retiring, himself to the table where the gentlemen assemble to eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow if they don't die they are likely to be sick. H.R.H. eats turkey, chicken and lobster salad, oysters, cakes, fruits, and confections of every sort washing them down with moderate gulps of Champagne. Finally being filled to the utmost tension he rises and again haunts the parlor and passes through a repetition of the scenes of the earlier part of the evening. He gets less opportunities to talk to the ladies and to sit down, his boots hurt him more and more and he begins to wish himself in bed at home. After an hour or two, many better and less sober people being gone before him, he slips out in the middle of a reel and hobbles home alone and painfully, and by three o'clock is asleep "dreaming it over again." Such was the first appearance of HRH in the fashionable circles of Tensas society. Had I patience and ability I could tell

you of many little things that it would please and fatigue you greatly to read.

I have written much more than I intended, and I should not have the assurance to send it to anybody else but being my reputed parents I naturally feel privileged to abuse your forbearance.

I believe I have already said that I had nothing to say. I now repeat it.

Love to everybody, From your aff. Son Henry[20]

This was apparently typical of social events held in St. Joseph in the pre-war years, and it was not unusual for a gentlemanly newcomer and professional man such as Henry to be invited. Most of those attending the party were probably from the professional class—lawyers, clerks, doctors, and engineers—along with the more prominent tradesmen and their ladies. Some of the local planters may have been there, although the well-established members of that class were often quite reserved about mixing socially with tradesmen or professional people.[21]

There were considerable differences in wealth and social status among Tensas planters. In 1860, there were 205 agricultural establishments in the parish. There were no farmers, only planters. Even the seven with assets totaling less than $10,000 were still shown as planters in the 1860 census. Any landowner who owned or rented a small gang of slaves would grow even a few bales of cotton, an internationally traded cash crop, which automatically accorded the title of "planter" to the grower. These smaller planters no doubt hoped to replicate the success of pioneers such as Job Routh or Job Bass, who had received Spanish land grants more than half a century before. Few would ever rival John Routh, who declared total assets of $824,000 in 1860. Many came close, however, for there were 47 planters in the parish who each owned more than 100 slaves. One of these was Dr. Haller Nutt, an innovative planter whose research produced new strains of cottonseed, improved ginning and pressing machinery, and more efficient methods of plantation management. Dr. Nutt owned two plantations with some 300 slaves valued at $443,000 in Tensas Parish alone. It is unlikely that anyone from these families attended the party with Henry, especially since many of them did not even live in the Parish, but hired managers to run their plantations.[22]

By the beginning of December 1860, Henry had cut the cord binding him to Marshall, who, in any case, completed work on his levee contract two months later. Meanwhile, Henry went north to Bellaggio in East Carroll Parish, where he spent six weeks surveying plantations and celebrating the Christmas holidays. As the new year began, Tenney and Richardson continued business as usual, seemingly unaffected by Louisiana's succession from the Union on January 26. By February 16, they were surveying about ten miles from St. Joseph, where they had set up camp with a team of three men.[23]

Henry's professional future was looking rosy. He had become a partner in an established surveying business serving a booming cotton economy. Now, working for his own account, he had reached a level of prosperity that he had only dreamed of a few years before. The partnership's prospects seemed unlimited: much of the land in Tensas and surrounding parishes had not yet been brought under cultivation, which left a considerable area to be divided up, surveyed, and prepared for planting. As fast as the economy might be growing, however, political events were moving even faster and looming ever larger. Soon, even those who had never been interested in politics, such as Henry Brown Richardson, would find no room in their lives for anything else.[24]

Vacation and Election

Henry probably did not realize it at first, but he was rapidly becoming a Southerner. During his trip home in September of 1860, he seemed thoroughly dismayed by the intensity of the election campaign and the pro-Republican sentiment that it had aroused. As he began his trip back to Louisiana, he wrote:

> Claremont I found uproarious with Republicans of the blackest dge (sic). And in this connection it may be significant and not uninteresting to add that the Tremont House alone sold several gallons (I speak with authority) of gin to the thirsty supporters of "Old Abe"—many of whom, we are given to understand, found no little difficulty in supporting themselves. Poor Douglas and his virtuous mother were so reviled and bespattered with republican filth as it would have done your heart good to hear it. I shall expect great things of Sullivan Co[unty, NH] in November—Our strength and safety is in the cultivation of the masses.[25]

Henry had rarely come so close to expressing a political opinion. He was probably more circumspect about expressing his views in Tensas Parish because many in the South considered Douglas a traitor. The Little Giant had incurred Southern enmity by consistently supporting the principle that local sovereignty must determine whether a territory or a State should be slave or free. Thus, according to his Freeport Doctrine, the Dred Scott decision could not be enforced in a territory opposed to slavery because its citizens would never permit police power to support the peculiar institution. His ultimate act of treason, however, came in 1858, when he led Congress to refuse admission of Kansas to the Union as a slave State following a constitutional convention and a referendum in that territory that were tainted by fraud and misrepresentation.[26]

A few days after leaving Claremont, Henry was in Chicago, where Republicans were preparing a huge campaign rally:

> The companies of sleepy looking Wide Awakes, loaded down with carpet bags, torches, and irrepressible patriotism, the fantastical costumes of the un-terrified supporters of "Old Abe", the unshorn beards and antique garments of the "delegations from the interior counties;" the Lung testers, Needle threaders, Apple sellers, Boarding House Runners, Harlots and Blacklegs; the Policemen, Porters, Members of Congress, Pick-pockets and Preachers; the circus, Senator Seward, C.M. Clay, Lady Franklin, the intelligent public and myself, all congregated and conglomerated here, marching and countermarching, making speeches and drinking whiskey, cheering Lincoln and cursing Douglas, eating sheet gingerbread and smoking penny cigars; negotiating with the Gods chosen people for cotton velvet waistcoats, and brazen jewels, taking Sarah Ann and the baby, Grandma'am and fifteen carpet bags up to see the Wigwam and to the top of the courthouse, having ones eyes dazzled by gaudy colors, ears deafened with hideous noises, and nose choked with noxious odors, & corns mashed with all the big boots in the Republican Party—all this and much more equally pleasant and memorable, renders this a day worthy to be noted, described, “extenuated and set down in malice.”[27]

The motley crowd that Henry found in Chicago came to the big city to welcome Senator William H. Seward and to hear him pronounce a major campaign speech in favor of the Republican candidate, Abraham Lincoln. Seward, himself, had been favored to win the nomination the previous May when the Republican convention opened in the "Wigwam," a convention hall built in Chicago especially for the occasion. He was keenly disappointed when Lincoln pulled ahead and won the nomination on the third ballot. However, Seward's devotion to the Republican cause and his magnanimous nature soon led him to rally to Lincoln's support. In fact, as he arrived in Chicago, he was approaching the end of a successful two-month-long cross-country speaking tour, which would turn out to be one of the keys to Lincoln's victory in November.[28]

In the unlikely event that Henry attended the Republican rally, he might have heard a speech by the "Emancipationist" politician and publisher Cassius M. Clay, who also campaigned for Lincoln in 1860. The text of Clay's Chicago speech has not come down to us, but he would surely have spoken in the same vein as in a letter he had written to the American Anti-Slavery Society seven years before:

> And as I thus love it [the Union], I shall make eternal war upon all those canting scoundrels, whether in Church or State, who would pervert its true prestige to the retainment of Slavery, and its extension and perpetuity. I return the war of lynchers and "respectable" mobs! I return the war of those, however powerful, whose main business it is in these States to "crush out Abolitionism!" I return the war of those who would, by sermons, tracts, or literature, aid the reaction of anti-revolutionary avowals. I return the war of those, who, under the hallowed names of Democracy and Republicanism, stand by foreign despotisms, and who, amid blood and prisons, bear banners described with "law and order!" I return the war of the Supreme Courts of the United States, who, under the pretense of devotion to law, pervert every principle of justice; of the President, of the slave Power, and of a servile congress! With a manly heart, which may be beaten down, but never conquered, I shall stand by you and all true men; and my voice shall ever be, "Don't give up the ship."[29]

Henry was probably familiar with Cassius Clay's oratory. His simple presence at a political meeting was enough to mark the event as an act of aggression against the South. Clay had already survived two assassination attempts by slaveholders in his native Kentucky and was eventually forced to move his publishing activities across the Ohio River to Cincinnati.

Among the most dedicated Republicans during the 1860 campaign were the Wide Awakes, and Henry could not help but notice their presence in numbers at the Chicago rally. These were groups of young men in cities throughout the North, whose principal activity was marching in torchlight parades supporting Republican candidates. John Hay, the young journalist who later became Lincoln's assistant, described one of their more spectacular parades:

> Viewed from an elevated position, it wound its sinuous track over a length of two miles, seeming, in its blazing lights and glittering uniforms, like a beautiful serpent of fire. The companies … ignited vast quantities of Roman candles, and as the drilled battalions moved steadily on, canopied and crowded with a hissing and bursting blaze of fiery splendor … the enthusiasm of the people broke out in wild cheerings.[30]

Some Wide Awake units were organized as private police forces to maintain order at Republican meetings, to escort prominent Republican visitors, and to act as observers at the polls. The standard uniforms were full capes and black, glazed military-style caps. Southerners found the paramilitary aura of the groups to be obnoxiously aggressive, and southern extremists accused Wide Awake bands of intimidation and violence in southern and border states during the 1860 election campaign. As distasteful as the Republican campaign was to Henry and other Southerners, their political machine did an extremely good job, enabling Lincoln to carry every State in the North on November 6, 1860.[31]

Secession and War

Southern firebrands did not wait long to organize their response, and South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1960. The crisis had already begun when Henry took a break from his work to celebrate

the Christmas holidays in Bellaggio. As the new year began, he wrote to his parents, stressing the gravity of the situation:

> Of the movements in the "perilous crisis," you know more than I if you read the newspapers; but I doubt if you have a correct idea of the state of public feeling here. It's not what I expected. There is a cool determination in the great body of the people that really shows that they are in earnest. I have the strongest faith that the Union will again be perfect in a few years, but it will only be after the secession of most of the Southern states and the repeal of unconstitutional laws by the states of the North. "Them's my sentiments."[32]

Between January 10 and 14, the State of Louisiana seized several Federal military installations, including the Arsenal at Baton Rouge. By February 1, six more states, including Louisiana, had seceded, and on February 9, they joined with South Carolina to form the Confederate States of America with Jefferson Davis as President. A week later, Henry wrote:

> We are as quiet as we used to be in the days of the Confederation, although we have a flag on the river bank requesting the world to TRY US which the world don't seem disposed to do—knowing I suppose the strength and bravery of our cavalry company, which latter, by the way, I am thinking of joining.[33]

In the six weeks that passed since his previous letter, Henry's relationship with the rest of the world had changed; by February 16, he had begun to use "we" rather than "they" when writing about the citizens of Louisiana. The tone of the letters changed, too. Succession obliged him to make a choice, and he chose Louisiana. Henry had finally found the community where he would want to settle down. Two months of relative calm passed. Lame duck President Buchanan would do nothing to exacerbate the crisis, and Lincoln, after his inauguration on March 4, hesitated to take any action that would provoke the undecided border states to secede. Far away in Tensas Parish, the menace of war seemed to be receding. Henry was even thinking about another trip home to New Hampshire in the summer, as he wrote:

> As usual I have no news to tell you. There are today fresh "Rumors of Wars," but I have heard the cry of wolves so often that I don't believe it; though as in the fable they may really be upon us this time. But really I trust that Abram is not quite such a fool as to involve the country in a war, and will never believe it till I smell the smoke of gunpowder. I am not brave, but so far as I am personally concerned a war would please me. I have nothing to lose and all the world before me to gain; and when I had conquered my physical fears I doubt not I could fight like a tiger. In view of these circumstances (and a unanimous election by its members) I have joined the Tensas Cavalry. So when your chief executive sends an army to take St. Joseph, search the papers for accounts of brave exploits by your humble servant and glorious distinction or the other alternative. I treat the matter lightly for I think it all a farce on Abram's part. He is to make an attempt to collect the revenues as he is sworn to, and then give up like a sensible man, which I hope he is in the main, after all. If worst comes to worst I shall be happy to decapitate with my new saber any unfortunates he may send into these parts; for I trust none of my kin or friends will consent to be sent on such errands.[34]

Henry's recruitment into the Tensas Cavalry was a clear sign that he was accepted in Tensas society, a distinction that he could hardly have refused, even if he did not seek it. The roster of the unit's members included such names as Routh, Bondurant, Newell, Dorsey, Buckner, Bowie, and Bowman, who were among the prominent planter families of the Parish. The Tensas Cavalry was initially a home guard organization that some of the leading citizens had organized early in 1860 to remedy "…their defenseless situation in case of insurrection among the negroes or invasion of their homes by fanatics of the old John Brown stripe." At the beginning, the cavalry members were more interested in balls and barbecues than in military drill, but they were mustered into Confederate service on August 29, 1861, at Memphis, Tennessee.[35]

Suddenly, the crisis escalated into active warfare. Confederate forces bombarded Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, and, in response, President Lincoln declared a State of insurrection and called for 75,000 militia volunteers. The Confederate States, however, were ahead of their Union counterparts in grassroots organization. As each State seceded, it consolidated existing volunteer companies to form regiments and called for the

formation of new volunteer companies. These efforts met with rapid success. For young men who were free from the responsibilities of family and property, there was no longer any thought of balls and barbecues with the home guard. All were confident of a rapid Confederate victory, and many were eager to see action as soon as possible before the war was over.

Many years later, William Trahern, one of the early recruits from St. Joseph, recalled the formation of their first volunteer company:

> The bang! bang! of great guns in Charleston harbor, at the forts under control of the United States government, settled the question as to all possibility of peace. War was on!
>
> Dids't ever meet far down the street, with plumes and banners gay[?] The one long street, and the main one in old St. Joseph was one day a few weeks after this … filled to over flowing by surging humanity. The motive was the organization of a military company. Patriotism was rampant, and the scattered humanity was converted speedily into what was known as the "Tensas Rifles."[36]

Trahern evoked an ironic image of Civil War recruitment in St. Joseph by paraphrasing the first stanza of "Young Soldiers," a poem about small boys playing at war. These verses had been published in the ubiquitous McGuffey's Third Eclectic Reader and were familiar to many a soldier, North and South, who had had even a few years of schooling. Those Tensas Riflemen who were still alive at the end of the war and able to look back on their recruitment must have found the euphoria of that day ironic in the extreme, if not completely incomprehensible. On the day they enlisted, however, these early recruits were deadly serious as they expressed community and Confederate solidarity. Considering that Tensas could count only 345 white men between the ages of 16 and 35 in 1860, the 92 Tensas recruits who went off to Virginia in the early months of the war were the rural equivalent of a mass movement.[37]

Sincere patriotism notwithstanding, the young and not-so-young recruits of Tensas Parish did not organize themselves spontaneously into a functioning military unit. Whenever volunteer companies were formed, one or more leading citizens took the initiative in rounding up volunteers, who, in turn, usually elected the organizers as company officers. In St. Joseph on that fateful day, "with plumes and banners gay,"

the volunteers who filled the main street elected Charles B. Tenney as Captain of the Tensas Rifles. In those days, wherever Tenney went, his friend and business partner, Henry B. Richardson, would not be far away. Henry must have been part of the humanity that surged into the main street to join the Tensas Rifles on the first day of its existence. In any case, Henry enlisted as a private and helped recruit others for what he and his comrades foresaw as a short and glorious war.[38]

Henry's companions in arms were a motley crew. Officers under Captain Tenney were First Lieutenant David Buckner, scion of a well-known planter family, and Second Lieutenant Thomas Prince Farrar II, nephew and namesake of St. Joseph's leading lawyer. The rank and file were mostly under 30 and unmarried. They included plantation managers, farmers, clerks, tradesmen, craftsmen, and laborers. Aside from Lieutenant Buckner, however, there were only three young men from the planter families shown in the 1860 census. Originally, The Tensas Rifles probably numbered more than 100, including those from neighboring parishes or counties. However, some of the early recruits dropped out when they found that they would have to sign on for the duration in order to be incorporated into the Confederate States Army. After deducting these dropouts and adding later enlistments, the maximum total effective reached 104. Of this total, 30 were foreign-born, and 11 were born in the North.[39]

A few weeks later, after peremptory drilling, the new company headed south by steamboat toward New Orleans on an adventure they imagined would be brief and glorious. All had basked in the encouragement of their families, the respect of their friends, and the admiration of the young ladies of the Parish. None realized that the happiest and most splendorous period of their military service had come to an end. Few imagined that they would be among the ten killed or mortally wounded in battle, the 15 felled by disease, or the 24 discharged due to serious wounds or disabilities. Others must have underestimated the duration, hardship, and ferocity of the war or overestimated the strength of their own commitments because there were 21 who deserted and five more who were captured and took an oath of allegiance to the Union. Henry Brown Richardson, thanks to a combination of luck, talent, and determination, was one of the minority who would come through the war alive and whole and with a commitment to the Southern cause that remained firm to the end.[40]

Chapter 7
The War

Building an Army

The Metairie Race Course (now the Metairie Cemetery) was the first campsite for the independent companies from New Orleans and those converging from the rest of the State. Since the site lacked good drinking water and was infested with mosquitoes, Governor Thomas O. Moore, fearing an epidemic, ordered a new site to be created on healthier grounds. Captain Samuel L. James, a New Orleans engineer, was part of a task force sent to select the new site near the Tangipahoa railway station, 78 miles north of New Orleans. There, Captain James and his company prepared the new training ground for Louisiana's Confederate forces, named Camp Moore in the Governor's honor.[1]

> We were armed and equipped in April '61, and immediately went to New Orleans, where we were mustered into the state service for one year, and camped near the city. There we drank bad water and fought mosquitos, and I think upon the whole it was the hardest service I have seen. After a week or two of that life we were sent to Camp Moore, La., near the Mississippi state line, a very pleasant camping ground with good water and fine opportunities for fishing and bathing. But drilling and eating were the principal occupations, and I fancy I did my share of both. All were anxious to go to Virginia, but the C.S. government, at that time, wanted no more troops except such as were enlisted for the war; consequently about half my company was disbanded and returned home, while the remainder (myself among them) were mustered into the Confederate service for the war.[2]

The Sixth Louisiana Regiment was organized on June 2, 1861, at Camp Moore. The men elected Isaac G. Seymour, an experienced and capable soldier, as Colonel, Louis Lay as Lieutenant Colonel, and Samuel L. James as Major. The Tensas Rifles were incorporated on June 4, 1861, as Company D of that regiment.[3]

On June 9, half the regiment left by train for Virginia, and the other half followed two days later. All reached Manassas Junction by June 16 and were sent to an advanced position at Fairfax Station as part of Brigadier General Richard Ewell's brigade. Early in the morning of June 18, the regiment was nearly overrun by the advance guard of McDowell's troops and hastily withdrew to the far right of the defensive line south of Bull Run. General Beauregard, commanding the Confederates, had planned an attack on the Union's left flank and had concentrated his forces there. Early on July 21, Ewell's brigade, including the 6th Louisiana, had already crossed Bull Run and were advancing toward Centreville when Union General McDowell surprised Beauregard by attacking his left flank. Ewell's forces were pulled back and ordered to the opposite end of the field, a hot, dusty march of about nine miles. They arrived after the Confederate counter-attack had routed the Yankees, and were too late to join the fight.[4]

After the Federals' withdrawal, the Sixth Louisiana Regiment set up camp at Centreville and waited. The novice soldiers were frustrated by having missed the battle. Perhaps they assumed from their rapid victory that the war would be short. In fact, this was just the beginning of a long, dull period of camp life.

After First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run), the units participating were reorganized, and the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Louisiana Regiments, together with the Louisiana Special Battalion, were united to form the First Louisiana brigade, part of a division commanded by Richard S. Ewell, who was promoted to Major General. In the autumn, the Louisiana brigade was placed under the command of Brigadier General Richard Taylor, who was also from Louisiana. Taylor was the son of President Zachary Taylor and the brother of Jefferson Davis's first wife, which caused some murmuring in the brigade about political influence. He would, however, soon prove his merit.[5]

The organization of various brigades by their States of origin was designed to enhance esprit de corps and perhaps to minimize friction within operating units. In the case of the Louisiana brigade, however, this system of organization did not immediately have the desired effect,

perhaps because recent immigrants from the New Orleans area were so heavily represented in their ranks. The Louisiana brigade had more than its share of troublemakers, and when it came to troublemaking, the Irish contingent more than lived up to its reputation. One of the more serious incidents had a profound personal effect on Henry Richardson and confirmed his general dislike of the Irish. On October 3, 1861, his close friend and business partner, Charles B. Tenney, was killed by an accidental pistol shot.[6]

Corporal William Trahern of the same company told how it happened:

> Four or five drinking Irishmen were in the habit of coming into our camp late at night, and in a drunken condition, making night hideous. One night they broke the record for bacchanalian revelry, and it took nearly the whole company to stop them. As corporal, I reported the condition of affairs to Captain Tinney (sic) He came at once, and in an attempt to quell the disturbance, he found himself in danger, and undertaking to use the butt of his pistol, an explosion took place, landing the bullet in his abdomen, surgeons could not save him, and death resulted two hours later.[7]

Less than a fortnight later, another Irishman from the Sixth Louisiana was killed in a brawl with soldiers from the special Battalion. Colonel Isaac Seymour, commanding the Regiment, was an experienced soldier, and a strict disciplinarian, but could hardly be held responsible for keeping order in the entire brigade.

It took the even sterner hand of Brigadier General Richard Taylor to establish the desired degree of military discipline. One night a group of intoxicated recruits decided that certain of their comrades had been unjustly imprisoned in the guardhouse, and they attempted to liberate them by force. This was the last straw for General Taylor, who charged the rebellious rowdies with mutiny, punishable by the firing squad. A court-martial found them guilty, and despite an impassioned plea from the men's battalion commander, Taylor insisted that the death sentence be carried out by a firing squad from the men's own company. This was the first death sentence noted in Confederate records. However harsh this may seem for what some considered a boyish prank, Taylor's stern discipline seems to have paid off. Within a few months, his brigade was to become known as one of the best in the Confederate Army, not only

in terms of spit and polish and parade ground precision, but also in terms of fighting spirit.[8]

But the weather was growing colder, and before Christmas, the Louisiana brigade moved to winter quarters at Camp Carondelet, four miles from Manassas. They began felling trees and building log cabins chinked with mud to keep out the chill winds. Illness was also widespread, especially among the country boys, who had never developed immunity to diseases brought by recruits from the city. Henry Richardson, however, spent part of the winter in the healthy outdoor air; his engineering experience had become known to his commanding officers, who detailed him to help build a railroad line from Manassas Junction to Centreville. He returned to his Sixth Louisiana Regiment in February.[9]

Meanwhile, the Union forces had not been idle. The Army of the Potomac was growing in size and military skill under the capable direction of Major General George B. McClellan. In the face of this buildup, early in March 1862, Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston ordered a withdrawal to a more defensible line along the Rappahannock River and, in April, a further withdrawal across the Rapidan to Gordonsville. This last move also placed Confederate forces near a strategic rail line, which would enable Johnston to move men and materiel rapidly between the Shenandoah Valley in the West and Richmond in the East. In preparation for the southward withdrawal, Henry was ordered to report to General Taylor, who sent him on a reconnaissance mission to check the condition of roads, bridges, and fords as far as the Rapidan. Taylor's memoirs explain the necessity for this advance reconnaissance:[10]

> I was ordered to withdraw the infantry pickets from the lower Bull Run after nightfall, and move on a road through the county of Prince William, east of a line of railway from Manassas to Orange. This road was rough and heavy, and crossed by frequent streams, affluents of the neighboring Potomac. These furnished occupation and instruction to a small body of pioneers (pick and shovel men), recently organized….[11]

Taylor must have been pleased with Henry's reconnaissance report, for he soon assigned him to permanent duty as his mounted orderly. An aide with Henry's experience as an engineer and surveyor was essential

to supply Taylor with the information he needed to exercise effective military command. During 1862, Henry kept a notebook, which is visible at the Library of Congress. Six pages of this notebook show distances between towns and other landmarks in northwestern Virginia. This is information General Taylor would need each time his brigade moved.[12]

> I early adopted two customs, and adhered to them throughout the war. The first was to examine at every halt the adjacent roads and paths, their direction and condition; distances of nearest towns and crossroads; the country, its capacity to furnish supplies, as well as general topography, etc., all of which was embodied in a rude sketch, with notes to impress it on memory. The second was to imagine while on the march an enemy before me to be attacked, or to be received in my position, and make the necessary dispositions for either contingency.[13]

Jackson's Valley Campaign

With the arrival of favorable spring weather, General McClellan prepared to lay siege to the Confederate capitol of Richmond. Profiting from Union control of Chesapeake Bay, he began a massive buildup of forces southeast of Richmond. General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Army of Northern Virginia, favored concentrating Confederate forces around Richmond. However, General Robert E. Lee, then military advisor to President Davis, had another idea. In the hope of drawing off some of the Federal forces, Lee recommended creating a diversion in the Shenandoah Valley at the opposite end of the State. Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, commanding the Valley District, agreed to carry out this mission. Jackson's main objective was to keep as many Union troops as possible occupied in the Valley to prevent them from joining the campaign against Richmond. The Federals then occupied the northern half of the Valley with 20,000 troops under General Banks. If Jackson's campaign was successful, however, he might also divert General McDowell's 30,000 troops at Fredericksburg, who were poised to join the Richmond campaign.[14]

To mount this diversionary campaign, Jackson would need substantial reinforcements for the 6000 men under his command. The obvious candidate was Ewell's 8000-man division, including Taylor's Louisiana

brigade. Ewell's division had remained in reserve near Orange Court House, ready to move east or west as the military situation might require. In response to orders from Jackson, Ewell's division crossed the Blue Ridge Mountains on April 30, 1862, and encamped at Conrad's Store (now Elkton) near the southern end of the Valley. There, Jackson met Ewell and ordered him to watch General Shield's Union division at Harrisonburg for any movement up the Valley. It was important that Shields not reach Staunton, where he would be behind Jackson, potentially preventing his movement eastward.[15]

Meanwhile, Jackson led his men westward into the Allegheny Mountains, where 3000 men under Brigadier General Edward Johnson joined him to defeat the advance guard of an army under General John C. Fremont at the battle of McDowell on May 8. Jackson pursued the Federals, captured their wagon train, and began his return to the Valley on May 14, bringing Johnson's forces with him. While Jackson was in the mountains, Shield's division withdrew from Harrisonburg on May 5 and a week later approached Front Royal, where they seemed poised to cross the Blue Ridge. Ewell sent his cavalry to keep a close watch on Shields. He was worried that Shields and General Banks's other division might leave the Valley before Jackson had a chance to mount their diversionary campaign. While encamped at New Market, Jackson coordinated with General Ewell for a decisive movement northward. It was high time for the planned diversion to become diversionary because Major General Irwin McDowell was preparing to move against Richmond in cooperation with McClellan. On May 17, Ewell's cavalry confirmed that Shields's division had left the Valley, heading east to join McDowell at Fredericksburg.[16]

The Shenandoah Valley runs from south to north between the Blue Ridge Mountains on the East and the Allegheny Mountains on the West. The Valley is divided lengthwise for 50 miles by the Massanutten ridge. The main Shenandoah Valley lies on the west side of the Massanutten, and the smaller Page Valley lies on the east. The topography of the Valley thus offered an ideal maneuvering ground for a skillful tactician such as Jackson, who, through deception and rapid movement of the 16,000 men under his command, was able to win decisive battles against three Union armies with forces totaling over 60,000.

Henry Richardson remained with Brigadier General Taylor as a mounted orderly during Stonewall Jackson's entire Valley campaign. Taylor's reputation and that of his brigade must have preceded him into

the Valley because Jackson requested them, sight unseen, to be detached from Ewell's division in the Page Valley and to operate directly under his command from the beginning of the campaign. Taylor's men then moved to the main valley, taking a roundabout route to deceive the enemy. This required Taylor's pioneers, probably including Henry Richardson, to make some rapid repairs to a small country road at the southern end of the Massanutten. The Louisiana brigade proved its marching mettle on May 20 by covering 26 miles and arriving at Jackson's camp near New Market in splendid order. Taylor recalled their arrival with evident pride:[17]

> Over three thousand strong, neat in fresh clothing of gray with white gaiters, bands playing at the head of their regiments, not a straggler, but every man in his place, stepping jauntily as on parade, though it had marched twenty miles and more, in open column with arms at "right shoulder shift," and rays of the declining sun flaming on polished bayonets, the brigade moved down the broad, smooth pike, and wheeled on to its camping ground. Jackson's men, by thousands, had gathered on either side of the road to see us pass. Indeed, it was a martial sight, and no man with a spark of sacred fire in his heart but would have striven hard to prove worthy of such a command.[18]

Even Jackson could not help being impressed by Taylor's brigade; the following day, he chose them to lead the way back through a pass in the Massanutten toward Luray, in the Page Valley, where the rest of Ewell's division joined them. On May 23, Taylor's brigade led the march northward and was in the vanguard of the attack on Front Royal. The Union defenders resisted stubbornly but were overcome by the superior Confederate numbers.[19]

Jackson's diversion was now starting to have the desired effect: on May 24, McDowell's orders to move upon Richmond were suspended, and he was ordered to move 20,000 troops to the Shenandoah Valley. At the same time, Fremont's army was ordered to move against Jackson from the west.[20]

When he heard that the Confederates had taken Front Royal, General Banks realized that he risked being trapped at Strasburg and withdrew his division northward to Winchester. Taylor's brigade, again moving with Jackson, caught up with Banks's wagon train at Middletown,

captured prisoners and stores, followed the retreating Unionists along the main Valley Pike, and reached the outskirts of Winchester on the evening of May 24. Ewell's division kept pace with Jackson, moving along the Front Royal Road to the east. Early the following morning, both divisions began their attack on Winchester. About a mile south of town, Jackson's progress was blocked by a strong Union position on a ridge to the west of the Pike. Jackson summoned Taylor, whose brigade was about a mile to the rear, and, pointing to the Federal position, said simply, "You must take it," which Taylor proceeded to do as soon as he could get his brigade into position. According to Jackson's report, the Louisiana brigade "…steadily, and in fine order, mount[ed] the hill, and there fronting the enemy where he stood in greatest strength, the whole line magnificently swept down the declivity and across the field, driving back the Federal troops and bearing down all opposition before it."[21]

During the early stages of the attack, General Taylor was seen leading his troops with his raised sword in hand. Therefore, it is likely that Henry Richardson, as his mounted orderly, was also in the heat of the battle at Winchester. More often, however, Henry's function was to go out on advance reconnaissance and bring back information on the enemy's position and movements. In recognition of such "valuable services" at Winchester, Taylor recommended that he be commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Engineer Corps, and General Ewell endorsed the recommendation, noting, "I am aware of the invaluable services rendered by him on various occasions."[22]

After the Louisiana brigade's victorious charge, Banks saw that his hold on Winchester was untenable. He organized a rapid retreat northward to Martinsburg, where the remnants of his division crossed the Potomac. Jackson and Ewell nevertheless continued their diversion northward to the heights overlooking Harpers Ferry. Jackson was not aware that he had already achieved the primary purpose of his Valley campaign: the diversion of forces that might have been turned against Richmond. When the news of Banks's defeat reached Washington, Shields's division was ordered back to the Valley, and two more divisions under McDowell at Fredericksburg stood ready to intervene.[23]

By May 30, Jackson realized that he was in an extremely vulnerable position. Forces under Shields from the east and Fremont from the west threatened to converge behind him and cut off the retreat of his forces, now reduced by casualties to 15,000 men. Rapid withdrawal up the Valley Pike was urgent. But parsimonious Presbyterian that he was,

Jackson would not abandon the large quantities of stores that he had captured at Winchester. Instead, he ordered them south in a wagon train eight miles long, accompanied by 2300 Union prisoners. With the odds seemingly long against him, he set himself and his men to move their now cumbersome force in a race with their pursuers to reach the strategic position of Cross Keys at the southern end of the Massanutten barrier. Along the way, the Louisiana brigade again distinguished itself in a delaying action against Fremont's advance guard west of Strasburg. Later, they also served as a rear guard to protect the retreating column from attacks by Fremont's cavalry.[24]

During the withdrawal, General Taylor came to appreciate the Irishmen who had given him so many headaches a few months before. He wrote, "They were steady as clocks and chirpy as crickets, indulging in many a jest whenever the attentions of our friends in the rear [Fremont's cavalry] were slackened." As combat experience broke down prejudices, even Henry Richardson must have come to view his Irish comrades more favorably. Of course, as Taylor's mounted orderly, he would have little time for such considerations, busy as he must have been with reconnaissance and courier duty.[25]

On June 6, Jackson's and Ewell's divisions reached Harrisonburg and sent their wagon train and prisoners across the North River toward the temporary safety of Port Republic. Heavy rains and mud slowed the wagon train and its pursuers. Nevertheless, Fremont's forces were catching up, and Ewell led three regiments who turned back their advance guard about a mile south of Harrisonburg.[26]

Meanwhile, Jackson's scouts, from perches on Massanutten peaks, had been following the parallel movement of Shields's division up the Page Valley. Jackson knew that he would soon have to face them and had ordered his cavalry to guard the Page Valley Road north of Port Republic. Somehow, Shields's cavalry eluded their Confederate counterparts and surprised Jackson with a brief raid on the quiet Sunday morning of June 8. The raiders were quickly driven off, but shortly afterward, Ewell's division was hit by elements of Fremont's army at Cross Keys. Ewell's men not only resisted but won a clear victory. Fremont, with his usual excess of caution, had sent forth only a fraction of his 10,000-man force, which Ewell's 5000 veterans severely mauled and drove back.[27]

Early the next morning, Ewell withdrew across the North River to Port Republic to join Jackson in an attack on a detachment of 3000 men

from Shields's division comprising two infantry brigades plus artillery and cavalry. Ewell left two brigades behind at Cross Keys with orders to delay any advance by Fremont, but, if necessary, to retire across Congers Creek and destroy the bridge. After passing through Port Republic, Ewell's men had to cross over a makeshift plank bridge hastily placed over the South River. Taylor's brigade, in the lead, crossed easily, but as planks began to fall off the rickety structure, the following brigades were slowed to a single file.[28]

Meanwhile, Jackson had underestimated the time necessary to move everyone across and had launched the attack with only 600 men of the Stonewall brigade, who soon risked being overwhelmed. As Taylor's brigade arrived, they again had the chance to render distinguished service when Jackson chose them to take out a well-entrenched Union artillery battery on a height to the right of the battlefield. There, Taylor's brigade suffered nearly 300 casualties in some of the fiercest hand-to-hand fighting of the war. The Louisiana men captured the heights twice, only to be driven off. With the support of two Virginia regiments led by General Ewell, they rallied for a third and finally successful assault. Henry's old regiment, the Sixth Louisiana, was among the heaviest hit, with Lieutenant Thomas Prince Farrar II of the Tensas Rifles among those fatally wounded. Meanwhile, Ewell's three other brigades reached the field one after the other until their numbers were sufficient to recover the advantage and force a Federal withdrawal. Still, it was probably the Louisiana brigade's heroic assault and capture of the Federal artillery position that won the day for Jackson's army.[29]

The Battle of Port Republic marked the end of the Valley campaign. Fremont could not pursue Jackson after the bridge at Cross Keys was destroyed. Shields withdrew to Front Royal, and McDowell's army went back to Fredericksburg, again ready to reinforce the siege of Richmond. But Jackson's and Ewell's tired soldiers were to have only a few days' rest before Lee sent for them to join his forces defending Richmond. On June 17, Jackson ordered Ewell's division to cross the Blue Ridge to Charlottesville and then continue to Gordonsville on June 21. From there, the men proceeded by rail and on foot toward Ashland.[30]

The Seven Days

Since March 1862, a Union Army of some 120,000 men under General George B. McClellan had been moving cautiously westward until they

were almost within sight of Richmond. General Joseph Johnston's defending forces had attempted to halt their advance at the inconclusive battles of Williamsburg and Seven Pines. The Confederates suffered heavy casualties during the latter battle. General Johnston himself was wounded and was replaced in command by General Robert E. Lee on June 1. Lee was then able to put into practice his ideas for an offensive defense that would shape the strategy of his Army of Northern Virginia until the final months of the war. Lee planned not just to defend Richmond but to inflict the maximum possible damage on McClellan's army while forcing him to withdraw.[31]

McClellan's forces had been advancing along a peninsula surrounded by Chesapeake Bay on the East, the James River on the South, and the York River and its affluent, the Pamunkey, on the North. Four of McClellan's five Corps were operating on the southern side of the peninsula. The fifth Corps, under General St. John Porter on the north side, was separated from the others by a small river called the Chickahominy. Lee figured that if he could concentrate his troops on the north side, he could defeat Porter's isolated Corps and take control of the Richmond and York River Railroad. Without this lifeline to his supply base on the Pamunkey River, McClellan would be forced to abandon the siege of Richmond. First, however, the Confederates spent most of June strengthening the fortifications east of Richmond so that the city could be defended by two divisions while the rest of the army took the offensive.[32]

Lee exposed his plan to his lieutenants in a meeting near Richmond on June 23, 1862. Three divisions under Jackson were supposed to be the key to this offensive. Jackson's and Ewell's divisions, now reputed for their mobility, would be strengthened by a division under General Chase Whiting and would march to outflank Porter's Corps on the north. At the same time, three other divisions would cross the Chickahominy and hit them from the south. The weak point in this plan was that the Valley Army had not recovered from the strain of their Valley campaign and their fatiguing move to the east. Additionally, Jackson and his staff had little knowledge and no good maps of the swampy wooded peninsula. Notwithstanding his fatigue and that of his troops, Jackson agreed to march his forces nearly 40 miles in two days from Beaver Dam Station to a position north of Mechanicsville, where he would launch an attack on Porter's unprotected right flank.[33]

Jackson had hardly slept for three nights preceding the meeting with Lee, which perhaps accounts for his failure to assess the difficulty of his mission. His subordinates were probably in no better condition, particularly after a rainy day's march through mud and high water to Ashland. General Taylor, for example, was immobilized by headaches and partial paralysis and had to follow the campaign in an ambulance carriage. Colonel Isaac Seymour then took command of the Louisiana brigade as the three divisions moved out from Ashland at 2:00 a.m. on June 26. At this point, they were already behind schedule. Jackson's troops still had about 20 miles to march, and they were supposed to launch their attack early that same morning. Union cavalry further delayed their march by felling trees across the roads, destroying bridges, and attacking Jackson's column as it crossed Totopotomoy Creek. It was already late afternoon when the three divisions under Jackson finally reached their rendezvous. Meanwhile, the newly promoted division commander, Major General A.P. Hill, impatiently awaited Jackson's flank attack on Porter's division at Beaver Dam Creek. The sound of Jackson's guns was supposed to be the signal for him to cross the Chickahominy and attack Porter's front. Hill finally lost patience, disobeyed orders, crossed the river at 3:00 p.m., and launched his frontal attack on Porter's well-entrenched Corps. Ewell, whose division was only two miles from Porter's northern flank, was about to intervene when Jackson ordered him instead to bivouac for the night with Whiting's division at nearby Hundley's Corner. Why Jackson did not rush to A.P. Hill's support by charging down Porter's flank has never been satisfactorily explained. Without a flank attack to disorganize Porter's strong defensive position, Hill's futile frontal attacks never made a dent in the enemy's lines but cost his men extremely heavy casualties. D.H. Hill's and Longstreet's divisions eventually arrived with reinforcements, but could not recover the advantage in the confusion of this battle that seemed lost from its beginning.[34]

Despite the Union victory in the battle of Mechanicsburg, McClellan decided to withdraw Porter's Corps across the Chickahominy on the morning of July 27, thus abandoning the York Railroad. In his report, McClellan cited Jackson's arrival on his exposed northern flank as one of the main reasons for this withdrawal. McClellan somehow concluded that the Confederates had 200,000 troops, outnumbering him nearly two to one, whereas Lee had only 90,000 troops under his command.

Although Lee could not have known at that moment, he had achieved one of his main objectives before his troops had won a single battle.[35]

McClellan and Porter believed, however, that it would be too dangerous to move Porter's troops across the river in broad daylight and decided to make a stand in a well-prepared position near Gaines Mill, where they controlled two bridges across the Chickahominy. Lee concentrated all six of his available divisions on one front in this attack on Porter's well-fortified position. Once again, A.P. Hill's division began the attack in the afternoon of June 27 with only Longstreet's division to support him. Once again, Jackson was late. When his divisions arrived, Ewell's was in the lead, and he quickly deployed his brigades to the front line with A.P. Hill and Longstreet on his right and D.H. Hill on his left. Whiting and Trimble were delayed due to a confusing transmission of orders, but arrived in time to supply needed reinforcements.[36]

The Louisiana brigade was on the right next to A.P. Hill's division. Under the leadership of Colonel Isaac Seymour, they formed their line of battle in an open field, descended into a ravine, crossed a swampy stream, and launched an uphill charge against the first of three lines of Federal rifles. The charge had no sooner begun when Seymour was hit by bullets to the head and body. His orderly, Henry Richardson, caught him "as he fell dead from his horse." Suddenly leaderless, the battered Louisiana brigade was too confused to continue and withdrew from the field. Hood's Texas brigade eventually filled the gap, resumed the charge, and broke the Federal line with coordinated support from other units all along the front. Fresh Federal troops arrived in time to prevent a rout and to cover the retreat of Porter's Corps across the river during the night. Gaines Mill would be the Confederates' only clear tactical victory during the Seven Days' battles, but it came at the high cost of nearly 8000 casualties.[37]

The following day, Lee sent Ewell's division with cavalry to seize and tear up the track along the York Railroad at Dispatch Station—another chore where Henry Richardson's experience could be useful. They found the railroad abandoned and the bridge across the Chickahominy destroyed. Now, Lee knew he had succeeded in forestalling a siege of Richmond because McClellan had abandoned his supply line. But Lee was far from satisfied and set out to destroy McClellan's retreating army. His plan still called for Jackson to outrun and outflank the Federals, who were withdrawing to their base at Harrison's Landing on the James

River. The main force of Lee's army would pursue the Federals on the south side of the Chickahominy, while Jackson, still on the north side, would cross the river and hit them on the flank. This looked like an excellent plan, but it turned out to be too complicated to be executed by Lee's nine division commanders trying to coordinate their movements through difficult and unfamiliar territory. Jackson, seemingly overcome by a strange lassitude, failed to show up for the two following battles. His colleagues did not do much better: Magruder's division attacked alone at Savage Station and was repulsed by three Union divisions. The following day, only two out of seven available divisions saw action in the Battle of Glendale, yet another inconclusive engagement.[38]

By July 1, the retreating Federals had taken an impregnable position at Malvern Hill, a 150-foot height, on which they had massed 100 pieces of artillery, supported by four infantry divisions and four more divisions in reserve. Despite the obvious difficulty of assailing this fortress, Lee decided to make another attempt to cripple the Army of the Potomac before it escaped to safety under the protection of their gunboats at Harrison's Landing. For once, he was able to assemble all nine of his divisions for the attack, but it took most of the day to deploy them to their assigned positions. The attackers then had to cross a narrow open field upon which the Union artillery concentrated its fire. The Confederate attack was badly coordinated, and the withering Union artillery fire caused their assaults to fizzle out before they got more than a few yards up the hill.[39]

The Louisiana brigade, then commanded by Colonel Leroy Stafford, was soon advanced to fill a gap in the front line. In the confusion of the battle, one of the Louisiana regiments received a command that its captain mistakenly understood as an order to attack. The men passed the supposed order along, and the result was that three of the brigade's four regiments moved out in a suicidal charge that was never meant to happen. The isolated Louisianians were pushed back with heavy losses. About that time, the Confederates ceased their attacks and simply held their positions until nightfall.[40]

If McClellan had counter-attacked the following day, he probably would have inflicted heavy losses on Lee's army, but he instead withdrew to another prepared position under the protection of his gunboats. After his heavy losses at Malvern Hill, Lee decided not to press his attacks further against deadly Union firepower massed at Harrison's

Landing. During the Seven Days Battles, the Army of Northern Virginia suffered nearly 20,000 dead and wounded, nearly twice the casualties suffered by McClellan's army. Still, the campaign was a strategic victory for Lee, who had shattered McClellan's plans to besiege Richmond. By July 10, Lee judged that McClellan would not renew his movement toward Richmond, and the Louisiana brigade, along with the rest of Ewell's division, withdrew to Richmond. Lee ordered Jackson's and Ewell's divisions to return to the West, where they could meet any threat that might be mounted by the Federal forces they had fought in the Shenandoah Valley. They remained encamped near Gordonsville until the last days of July.[41]

Lieutenant Richardson

This fortnight's rest period allowed units in the field to get organized and adapt to reassignments and promotions decided at Richmond. At the end of July, Richard Taylor was promoted to Major General and placed in command of Confederate forces in western Louisiana. Before leaving his brigade, Taylor had recommended that his mounted orderly, Henry Richardson, be commissioned as an officer. By the end of 1861, the Confederate command had recognized an urgent need to expand the Engineer Corps, which had comprised only a handful of officers at the beginning of the war. Early in 1862, Congress authorized a Provisional Engineer Corps of 50 officers, and by April of that year, the complement was doubled to 100. This promotion came as a complete surprise to Henry. While in camp at Gordonsville, Ewell summoned him to division headquarters and advised him of Taylor's recommendation. Henry was immediately assigned to Ewell's staff, and in a few days, his commission as a First Lieutenant arrived. The army's need for engineers was even more keenly felt at the front lines, where Ewell's division had thus far been operating without a staff engineer. Henry's "valuable services" in Taylor's brigade had made him the obvious candidate to fill this need once the expansion of the Engineer Corps had been authorized.[42]

This promotion brought a complete change in Henry's lifestyle. As a junior officer, he would have the right to share a wall tent of about 14 feet square with another junior officer. On campaign, however, he probably followed General Taylor's example and used a tent fly, a large canvas sheet, usually 21 by 14 feet. These were much easier to set up and

take down, with makeshift supports like ropes strung between trees. When campaigning in friendly territory, General Ewell was often invited to stay with some leading citizen of the area, and the officers of his staff might be included in the invitation. In such cases, the general officer would have a private room, while staff members could wind up sleeping a dozen to a room and on the floor. But even this worst case, indoors was better than a tent fly on a cold winter's night.

The most visible change in Henry's status was his new uniform. Assuming that he adopted the regulation uniform for staff officers (which many officers did not), he would henceforth wear dark blue trousers with gold stripes down the side, and a gray, double-breasted frock coat with two rows of seven brass buttons. As signs of his rank, he would wear two golden bars on his collar and, on each sleeve, intricate loops of gold braid known as Austrian knots. As for hats, he may have worn the Louisiana brigade's favored Confederate slouch hat, which was something like a cowboy's Stetson or a forage cap, which vaguely resembled a French officer's kepi with soft sloping sides.[43]

It would take more than a fancy uniform, however, to establish Henry's authority as an officer, especially since he was serving in the same command where he had previously been known as an ordinary private soldier. He would have to prove himself through the steady performance of his new duties. As Division Engineer Officer, he would take charge of the Division's Pioneer Corps, plus any men who might be detailed from the line to build or destroy fortifications, repair roads, railroads, and bridges, and put pontoon bridges in place. When Ewell was operating under Jackson's command, however, Jackson would control these purely engineering functions through his own Engineer Officer, Lieutenant (later Captain) James K. Boswell. This was certainly the case when forces under his command were on the move, as they often were. During such movement, Division Engineer Officers would reconnoiter roads, bridges, and fords to determine whether artillery and wagon trains, as well as troops, could be passed safely and expeditiously. Before or during actual combat, the engineer's practiced eye would be an invaluable aid in determining the location and strength of enemy positions. In the heat of battle, an engineer, as well as any other staff member at hand, might be called upon to run urgent errands such as passing messages to other commands. In short, during the early months of his career as an officer, Henry was probably doing about the same thing as

when he was a mounted orderly, but now at the division level and with greater responsibility.

Henry also had to learn to get along with his new commanding officer. General Ewell was a kind and good-natured man but also a strict disciplinarian who obeyed orders to the letter and expected his subordinates to do the same. In a combat situation, he could become excited and irritable to the extent that he might fail to transmit his orders with complete clarity but would have little patience with subordinates who were slow to understand. Henry probably spent some difficult moments at the beginning of this assignment, but the fact that he moved up with Ewell when the latter became a Corps commander shows that he earned Ewell's confidence.[44]

Cedar Mountain

Meanwhile, the recent battles had led both sides to reorganize their senior lines of command. We have seen that General Robert E. Lee faced problems coordinating the movements of the nine divisions engaged in the Seven Days campaign. Even though he had achieved his strategic objective in this campaign, he clearly could have inflicted more serious losses on the Federals if all his divisions had been at the right places at the right times. Lee would eventually establish a Corps command structure in the Army of Northern Virginia, and his first step in this direction was to divide the army into a left wing under Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson and a right wing under Major General James Longstreet.[45]

In the North, 75-year-old Lieutenant General Winfield Scott had resigned as Commander-in-Chief of the Union Armies on November 1, 1861. Lincoln then acted as his own commanding general for seven months. The lack of a centralized command, however, was not working out well, at least in the Virginia theatre. On July 11, 1862, Lincoln appointed Major General Henry Halleck as General in Chief of all the Union armies. The conservative Halleck was to prove a disappointment to Lincoln. His success as senior commander in the Western Theatre had been due in large part to the energetic action of his subordinates in the field, Generals Grant, Buell, and Pope. Halleck's talents proved to lie mainly in the back-office domains of strategic thinking and administration, both qualities sorely needed in the Union high command.[46]

At about the same time, Union Major General John Pope, also from the Western theatre, was placed in command of the newly designated Army of Virginia. This army regrouped 50,000 men in the divisions under Generals Banks, Fremont, and McDowell, who had fared so poorly against Stonewall Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley campaign. Pope's immediate priorities were to protect Washington from possible attacks via the Shenandoah Valley and to threaten the Confederate railway center at Gordonsville. To execute the second mission, Pope sent two divisions under Banks to the south, where they took up positions at Cedar Mountain, 20 miles north of Gordonsville. Jackson, whose forces now numbered 24,000, moved northward to meet this threat while Banks's 8000 men were still isolated from the main part of Pope's army.[47]

On the afternoon of August 9, Ewell's division led the way northward toward Culpepper Court House when they found their path barred by Federal Cavalry. As the latter were not easily discouraged by Ewell's artillery fire, Ewell prepared for battle. After consulting with Jackson, He deployed Jubal Early's brigade on the right side of the road and mounted the lower slopes of Cedar Mountain on the far right with his remaining two brigades and artillery. One can imagine Lieutenant Henry Richardson reconnoitering this rough mountain road and perhaps assembling an impromptu group of pioneers to fill ruts and chuckholes. If so, it was to little avail, as much of the road proved too steep for horses, and the men were obliged to tow the heavy cannons upward by hand. Henry's surveyor's eye could help determine artillery placement.[48]

Meanwhile, General Winder had arrived, leading Jackson's Stonewall division, which was deployed to the left of Early's brigade. At this point, Banks surprised Jackson by attacking before the entire Confederate force had reached the field. Two Union brigades broke through on the Southerners' left flank and held the advantage for over an hour. General Winder was killed while his division was fighting to hold the left, which heightened the confusion at this early stage of the battle. Ewell's artillery could provide effective support from its height of 200 feet above the field. Still, the two infantry brigades with him were initially prevented from descending into the fray by a mill pond on their right and by friendly artillery fire on their left. A counter-attack by General A.P. Hill's Light Division finally turned the Federal advance into a retreat. As the forces in the valley advanced, Ewell was able to

lead his two brigades down the hill to join in pursuit of the retreating Federals.[49]

According to Ewell's report, the newly commissioned Lieutenant Richardson was helpful during the Battle of Cedar Mountain. Ewell routinely mentioned his staff officers whenever he wrote a combat report, so this mention did not suggest any special merit on Henry's part. Nevertheless, it was his first recognition as a staff officer, which shows that he gradually earned Ewell's respect and that of his peers. Indeed, since Ewell was short on staff during this battle, he probably kept Henry and others busy carrying messages back and forth to Jackson, with whom he maintained contact by mounted courier. The relative isolation of Ewell's position, however, suggests that Henry's first experience of battle as a staff officer was no more hectic than what he had known as an orderly.[50]

The Confederates held their position at Cedar Mountain through the following day. Meanwhile, General Pope had brought up substantial reinforcements, and Ewell's division withdrew to the vicinity of Gordonsville on August 11 to avoid engaging Pope's numerically superior forces. About this time, Lee perceived that McClellan's Army of the Potomac was withdrawing from the peninsula. He then brought Longstreet's right wing north-westward toward Gordonsville, thus increasing the total of Confederate forces in the West to 55,000. Learning of this movement, Pope withdrew his divisions to the north of the Rappahannock while awaiting reinforcements from the Army of the Potomac. Jackson's wing then spent most of the next fortnight attempting to find or force a secure passage across the Rappahannock north of Brandy Station.[51]

Lee's War of Movement

Toward the end of August, one of Ewell's brigades under Jubal Early crossed the Rappahannock over a dilapidated dam near Warrenton Sulphur Springs. Before it could be reinforced, heavy rains caused the water to rise, making return passage over the dam impossible. Early's entire brigade was thus cut off from the rest of Jackson's force and risked capture or annihilation if Pope's men should discover their isolated situation before they could find their way back. Since Jackson had ordered the brigade across despite the risks of rising water, he took direct responsibility for bringing them back

and ordered engineers from A.P. Hill's division to build a temporary bridge, thus enabling Early's men to rejoin their comrades. Neither the official records nor the main secondary sources mention Ewell's Engineer Officer participating in this rescue operation, which seems curious since Early's brigade was part of Ewell's division. Perhaps the newly commissioned Lieutenant Richardson had not yet established his engineering credentials with Jackson's Chief Engineer, Lieutenant James K. Boswell, and certainly not with Jackson himself. On the other hand, there were two or three experienced Engineer Officers in Hill's division at this time. One of them, Lt. (later Major) Conway R. Howard had even been a Corps engineer during the pre-war era. Given this relative wealth of engineering talent, Hill's division was the obvious choice to carry out the urgent and delicate task of throwing a temporary bridge across the Rappahannock.[52]

In early August, Jackson's first plan to attack Pope was foiled by heavy rain and high water on the Rappahannock, which prevented a crossing in force north of Brandy Station. Instead, Lee and Jackson decided on an audacious and original plan. Longstreet's right wing would hold Confederate positions on the Rappahannock, while Jackson's left wing would feint a movement upriver toward the Shenandoah Valley. Then they would cross the Rappahannock upstream near Amissville, circle behind Pope's forces, and cut off his railway supply line to the north at Bristoe Station. Jackson led the movement, accompanied by a cavalry company. Ewell's "foot cavalry" preceded Jackson's other two divisions. The troops marched about 26 miles and spent their first night about one mile south of Salem (now Marshal). Despite Jackson's precautions, Union scouts had observed his movements, and Pope was fully aware that his troops had crossed the Rappahannock. Pope concluded that Jackson was returning to the Shenandoah Valley, and ordered reconnaissance in that direction.[53]

The next day, August 26, they reached Bristoe (now spelled Bristow), with Ewell in the lead, having covered nearly 50 miles in two days of heroic marching. At Bristoe, they were about 20 miles behind Pope's headquarters in Warrenton. The Confederates quickly overcame the small detachment guarding the station and began tearing up the railway line while their cannon blew two passing trains off the tracks. Another train stopped short and quickly reversed toward Warrenton. To keep the engineer from giving the alarm, Henry Richardson and Major Campbell Brown, Ewell's aide and cousin, took off after the train in a horseback pursuit worthy of a Wild West movie. As Brown came abreast of the

locomotive, he aimed his pistol at the engineer and pulled the trigger twice, but his arm failed to fire, and they were obliged to give up the chase as the train gathered speed.[54]

That same night, Jackson sent two regiments north along with cavalry under J.E.B. Stuart to capture the Union supply depot at Manassas Junction. Meanwhile, the rest of Ewell's division "slept on their arms" to guard against a possible Union advance from the direction of Warrenton to the west. In the morning, Jackson led two divisions to Manassas Junction, leaving Ewell's division to delay an expected advance by Union forces. While waiting, they busied themselves, tearing up tracks and destroying or damaging bridges. Jackson had left his staff engineer, Lieutenant J.K. Boswell, to oversee the destruction of the disabled Yankee trains and the bridge across Broad Run. This he accomplished with the assistance of two engineers from General A.P. Hill's staff. Lieutenant Henry Richardson was also available for engineering work, but all his experience had been with construction rather than destruction. He might have taken advantage of this opportunity for on-the-job training, perhaps with the Eighth Louisiana Regiment, as they destroyed the Long Bridge at Kettle Run. Ewell would also need Henry and others of his staff to coordinate the efforts of his three brigades plus cavalry and artillery, which were spread out over several miles to the west of Bristoe Station.[55]

The expected Union attack began about 2:00 p.m. Two regiments of the Louisiana brigade, performing advanced reconnaissance along the railway, made the initial contact. They fell back skirmishing and, joined by two other regiments, made a stand about 300 yards before Ewell's main line. These four regiments were able to hold off the Union attack for several hours. It soon appeared, however, that the Union forces risked cutting off Ewell's line of withdrawal toward Manassas Junction. In accordance with instructions from Jackson, who wished to avoid a general engagement at this point, Ewell ordered his three brigades plus artillery to retreat across Broad Run one unit at a time. The Union forces did not attempt to pursue them across the stream, thanks to Early's brigade, which remained on the opposite bank long enough to discourage pursuit. Ewell's men were thus able to rejoin Jackson at Manassas Junction, where they joined in feasting on captured victuals before fire consumed whatever supplies could not be carried off.[56]

Ewell's soldiers did not get much sleep that night because they were awakened and ready to march around midnight. Ewell had vague

orders from Jackson to follow A.P. Hill's division, marching northeastward toward Centreville. Jackson's orders to Hill had, however, been confused in transmission, as he had meant for him to march northwestward to Groveton. Corrected orders then obliged the two errant divisions to turn around and march westward toward Groveton. This delay proved inconsequential since General Pope had only the vaguest idea of Jackson's whereabouts. The Confederates' zigzag route probably added to the confusion of the Union command.[57]

Second Manassas (Bull Run)

Despite the misguided march, Jackson's three divisions assembled north of Groveton by the afternoon of August 28. Jackson chose that destination so that they could easily connect with Longstreet's five divisions, which he knew were only a day's march away. Meanwhile, he would conceal his forces on the north side of the Warrenton Turnpike, where they could pounce upon any of Pope's forces, which he believed would soon be moving eastward along that road toward Centreville. Sure enough, toward the end of the afternoon, an unsuspecting Union division came marching along the road and was hit by Tagliaferro's division, along with half of Ewell's division. Accounts of the engagement suggest that the Confederate attack was badly coordinated because the Union division, although surprised and outnumbered, held out for several hours before withdrawing under cover of darkness.[58]

One serious casualty of this engagement was General Ewell himself, who received a wound that led to the amputation of his leg and kept him out of action for nine months. Brigadier General A.R. Lawton, the division's senior brigade commander, then took command of the division as Jackson prepared to face an attack by Pope's forces the following day. Jackson knew his 24,000 men might have to hold out against a numerically superior Union Army for 24 hours or more while awaiting Longstreet's arrival. He, therefore, took up a strong defensive position facing southeast and spread out for more than a mile behind an unfinished railroad embankment. Two of Lawton's brigades were placed in the center, and his other two were held in reserve to be shunted back and forth along the line as threats developed. The Federal attacks arrived as expected and, despite being poorly coordinated, risked breaking Jackson's line several times during the long hours that followed. Longstreet's five divisions arrived on August 30, as expected,

but held off their attack until the last moment because Longstreet suspected that another Federal force might arrive and threaten his flank. That same afternoon, Longstreet finally unleashed his 25,000 men in a mass attack on the Federal flank. The combined Confederate forces completely surprised and resoundingly defeated Pope's army. Nevertheless, the Federals resisted stubbornly and withdrew in fairly good order to Centreville.[59]

Chantilly and Ever Northward

Despite their decisive victory, there was no rest for the weary Confederate troops. General Lee saw an opportunity to cut off and destroy the retreating Federals and, on August 31, sent Jackson's wing on another flanking movement to the north, with Longstreet's wing following in support. Jackson's troops were exhausted, however, and not able to move with their accustomed speed along roads muddied by sudden rain. This time, Pope was not caught napping, and on September 1, he sent two divisions to head off the Confederates about 20 miles from Washington at Chantilly (Ox Hill). Here, both sides became bogged down in an inconclusive battle marked by rain-soaked confusion. Lawton's division, in the center of the Confederate line, was almost broken by a fierce Federal charge in the midst of a violent thunderstorm. The Louisiana brigade was forced to fall back due to a faulty maneuver ordered by their inexperienced commander, but three regiments of Early's brigade moved in to stop the Federal advance. Henry Richardson was probably in the middle of all this confusion, but the official records give us no details. Since General Ewell was wounded and out of action just before Second Manassas, as was General Lawton later at Sharpsburg, the eventual Report was written by Lawton's successor, Jubal Early, who had no firsthand knowledge of what Lawton and his staff were doing during Second Manassas and Chantilly.[60]

In any event, Henry was with the tired men of Ewell's division, General Lawton commanding, as they marched again on September 3 after a day of rest. Long before they reached Leesburg, some 23 miles to the northwest, it became clear that Lee was not sending his army back to rest in relative safety behind the Rappahannock but northward into the enemy's country. The following day, the army began fording the Potomac, and Lawton's division went across on September 5, about seven miles above Leesburg. They then marched northeast along the

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and made camp at Monocacy Junction, just south of Frederick, Maryland.[61]

Robert E. Lee's decision to invade the North at this time was a daring one, and looking back, it seems almost reckless. His army had suffered 10,000 casualties and had few provisions. Lee was reinforced by two additional divisions, bringing his total force to 55,000 men before he crossed the Potomac. The men who had fought at Manassas and Chantilly, however, were exhausted and hungry, and many were sick and without shoes. Lee's army was further weakened by increased rates of straggling and desertion. On the other hand, the rich farmlands of Maryland made it possible for them to live off the land, whereas war-ravaged northern Virginia offered little sustenance for men or horses. Lee's troops were energized by the successes of the previous week's fighting, whereas his adversaries were utterly demoralized, or so Lee believed. Therefore, he thought he would have several weeks to wreak havoc with Union communications in Maryland and Pennsylvania before the Federals could pull themselves together. While Lee and Jackson were planning their next moves, their troops were busy commandeering supplies of food, clothing, and shoe leather from local farmers and merchants against "payment" in Confederate currency.[62]

Before venturing further north, Lee had to secure his communications with Virginia. The Shenandoah Valley was the best route, especially since the rail line through Manassas Junction had been destroyed during the previous weeks' operations. The plan to secure the Valley route called for the seizure of the Federal garrison at Harpers Ferry, Virginia: three divisions under Jackson would attack Harpers Ferry from the West, while three additional divisions covered the heights across the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers on the South and East. On September 10, Jackson's wing set off on a 35-mile march northwest to Williamsport, where they crossed the Potomac. Then they turned southeast, reaching Martinsburg on September 12. In the face of this overwhelming force, the small Union garrison at Martinsburg wisely withdrew to Harpers Ferry. Lee and Jackson expected that the troops defending Harpers Ferry would also withdraw rather than let themselves be trapped in an indefensible position, but the garrison there hung on stubbornly in response to orders from Washington. Jackson's men, who were already behind schedule, faced further delays as they prepared their attack. Time seemed to be running out for Lee's main force of 26,000 as McClellan's hastily rebuilt Federal army of 70,000 moved toward them from the East.

Lee sent most of Longstreet's wing eastward to block their advance at South Mountain. He also made contingency plans to withdraw his forces across the Potomac into Virginia if necessary.[63]

On September 13, two brigades from General Lafayette McClaws's division attacked Union positions on Maryland Heights, which overlooked Harpers Ferry from across the Potomac. The defenders put up stiff resistance at first, but the inexperienced Union brigade commander lost his nerve and withdrew across the river, leaving the position free for the Confederates to install their artillery. The same day, the three divisions of Jackson's wing advanced to Schoolhouse Hill, within artillery range of Harpers Ferry from the Virginia side. By the end of the day, Harpers Ferry was almost surrounded, but still, the defenders hung on despite destructive and demoralizing artillery fire from two sides.[64]

The artillery barrages continued the following day as Jackson hesitated to order a direct attack against the strong Union defensive line on Bolivar Heights west of Harpers Ferry. A head-on assault against Union artillery would entail heavy losses, and Lawton's division in the center of Jackson's line would be particularly exposed. Instead, Jackson directed A.P. Hill's division to outflank the Union defenses on their left. At the same time, two batteries attached to Lawton's division moved across the Shenandoah River during the night and took a position enabling them to enfilade the Union defenses. The Union commander quickly realized that resistance was useless and surrendered the garrison on September 15.[65]

Although he had allowed his troops little rest along the way, Jackson was now three days behind the optimistic schedule that he and Lee had adopted six days before. Meanwhile, General McClellan had managed to revive and reorganize the Union armies more quickly than Lee had anticipated. On September 14, D.H. Hill's and Lafayette McLaws's divisions had attacked and delayed Union troops advancing over three different South Mountain passes, but failed to stop them. On the morning of September 15, however, Lee finally received the message he had been waiting for, in which Jackson predicted rapid and "complete success" at Harpers Ferry. Nevertheless, after the defeat at South Mountain, Lee realized he would have to curtail his ambitions and assemble his troops to meet Federal troops advancing from the East. He chose a small town called Sharpsburg, near Antietam Creek, about a mile north of the Potomac.[66]

The men of Jackson's wing were exhausted after marching more than

60 miles over mountains—some without shoes—and wading the Potomac. By mid-September, the number of stragglers—or even deserters—in Lee's army must have grown to several thousand who lagged behind during the nearly continuous march since Second Manassas. Still, Lawton's division forded the Potomac on September 15 and slept at Shepherdstown. The next morning, they set off at dawn for Sharpsburg. A.P. Hill's division remained in Harpers Ferry to administer the surrender.[67]

Sharpsburg (Antietam)

General Robert E. Lee arrived at Sharpsburg on September 15 and made plans to resist the massive Army of the Potomac commanded by General George B. McClellan. When Jackson arrived on September 16, Lee placed him in direct command of the sector north of town, where he expected McClellan to attack first. Lawton's division reached Sharpsburg on September 16 and was first placed in reserve about a mile east of the town near General J.R. Jones's division. Later that day, Jackson ordered Lawton's and Jones's divisions to deploy north of the plateau crowned by the Dunker Church, an obvious Union objective. Lawton then moved his troops into position to meet the Federal onslaught expected the following morning. Two brigades, commanded by Colonels James A. Walker and Marcellus Douglass, deployed in an open field along a roughly west-to-east line about 100 yards south of a cornfield owned by farmer David Miller. General Harry Hays's Louisiana brigade remained nearby in the West Woods. Jones spread his troops across the Hagerstown Road and into the West Woods.

As darkness fell over the West Woods, confusion reigned for several hours as each unit tried to find its designated position. Even General Early was confused:

> General Jackson, in person, directed me to place my brigade on the left of his division, then commanded by Brigadier-General Jones, so as to prevent its being flanked, and to communicate with General Jones. It was then getting dark; some of our troops were engaged in front, and the shells from the enemy's guns were flying tolerably thick, and it was some time before I could ascertain where General Jones was. I found him, however, finally, not far from where I was, and, having ascertained that General

> Starke's brigade was his left, I moved to the left of that and placed my brigade in line along a road on which General Starke's left rested. In a short time Brigadier-General Hays, who had joined his brigade the day before, reported to me, and his brigade was formed in rear of mine, it being too dark to understand enough of the position to make very good dispositions.[68]

Subsequently, General Early's brigade was ordered northward to support Stuart's artillery.[69]

Union forces followed General McClellan's plan. General Joseph Hooker deployed the three divisions of his I Corps in the North Woods, ready to attack at dawn on September 17. General Joseph Mansfield's XII Corps remained nearby at Hooker's disposition. Before 6:00 a.m., one of Hooker's divisions, commanded by General Rickett, began to move out. His three brigades were to move southward, parallel to the Smoketown Road, through the East Woods on their left and the cornfield on their right. Shortly thereafter, Abner Doubleday's division moved out, following the Hagerstown Road. The two roads converged just north of the Dunker Church plateau, the objective of the Union attack, which, if taken, would enable the Union Army to control the northern end of the battlefield. It seemed like a sound plan, and the numerically superior Union divisions eventually overcame Lawton's and Jones's divisions. The first wave of the Union attack would have fared better if Rickett's three brigades had attacked in unison, as was probably intended. Their attack had barely begun, however, when it was hit by Confederate artillery fire, which killed one brigade commander and caused another to panic and flee the field. Those casualties left General Abram Duryea's brigade to fight nearly alone for a long half hour. After Rickett's missing brigades reached the front, they were soon reinforced by Abner Doubleday's division and, later, by George Meade's division.[70]

As Rickett's advance began, Hooker saw that the Confederates, probably including Douglass's and Walker's brigades, had already taken possession of the cornfield, and he ordered his artillery to sweep the area with canister. The effect was murderous, and as Union troops resumed their advance, Confederate artillery replied in kind. Even General Hooker was awestruck by the result:[71]

> [E]very stalk of corn in the northern and greater part of the field was cut as closely as could have been done with a knife, and the

> slain lay in rows precisely as they had stood in their ranks a few moments before. It was never my fortune to witness a more bloody, dismal battlefield.[72]

When Duryea's brigade reached the southern end of the cornfield, they ran smack into the strongest of Lawton's brigades, commanded by Colonel Marcellus Douglass and supported by Walker's brigade on their left. When the Union troops approached to within 250 yards, the Confederates stood up, and each side fired at the other as fast as they could reload until they ran out of ammunition. Meanwhile, Lawton had sent Brigadier General Hays's Louisiana brigade into position just south of the cornfield, and they began their advance as soon as Colonel Douglass called for support. The Louisiana brigade advanced toward the East Woods and held on a short time under heavy fire until they had lost more than half their men, killed or wounded.[73]

At some point during this action, Henry Richardson moved out of the West Woods to get a better look at what was going on or to transmit a message for General Lawton. As Henry wrote many months later:

> At Sharpsburg, … I was wounded by a musket ball, entering on the left side of the neck and passing through to the right shoulder, where it now remains. I fell senseless from my horse, and my foot catching in the stirrup, I was dragged some distance, and my ankle badly sprained, till fortunately, my horse was hit, and, as he went down, my foot loosened. Gen'l Lawton was wounded soon after, and I have never seen him since.[74]

Thus, Henry was out of action before 7:00 a.m., which was the approximate time General Lawton was wounded. Brigadier General Jubal A. Early succeeded Lawton in command of the division, and Jackson ordered his brigade back to the West Woods.[75]

As the remnants of Hays's brigade were forced back, General John Hood's division charged out of the West Woods and drove the Federals back to the northern edge of the cornfield. By that time, however, Hooker had sent all three of his divisions into the fight, eventually overwhelming Hood's division, which withdrew after 80% of his men were killed or wounded. Two brigades from D.H. Hill's division then moved northward from their position at the Sunken Road in a final attempt to hold the cornfield front.[76]

While the bloody struggle surged back and forth across the cornfield, two brigades of Doubleday's division were advancing on both sides of the Hagerstown Road west of the cornfield. J.R. Jones's division temporarily repulsed them, but they finally won a fragile foothold in the West Woods, where they menaced the Confederate position on the Dunker Church plateau.[77]

Meanwhile, Hooker had ordered General Mansfield's XII Corps into the fray. As Mansfield advanced toward the cornfield with General Alpheus Williams's division, he was mortally wounded and replaced by Williams. Shortly thereafter, another XII Corps division under General George Greene moved out of the East Woods, forcing Hill's two brigades to retreat. Greene's men continued their advance into the West Woods, forcing Rebel artillery to abandon their position on the Dunker Church plateau. At about 9:00 a.m., the plateau was finally in Federal hands; General Hooker's forces had reached their objective after three hours of the war's bloodiest fighting. Shortly afterward, General Hooker was wounded and replaced by General Meade, which led to a pause in the Federal advance.[78]

At about 7:00 a.m., McClellan had ordered General Edwin Sumner's II Corps to cross Antietam Creek and be ready to support Hooker if necessary. By 9:00 a.m., Sumner had reached the East Woods. Sumner then accompanied General John Sedgwick's division into the West Woods as they attempted to execute Sumner's plan. Initially meeting little resistance, Sedgwick pushed his attack too far to the west, exposing his overstretched brigades to a flank attack. Early's brigade held them back as best they could. That same morning, Alexander McClaws's division had arrived from Harpers Ferry. The men had just fallen asleep when McClaws received Lee's urgent orders to advance northward into the West Woods. The tired troops arrived just in time to hit Sedgewick's exposed flank and drive his division back to the East Woods with heavy losses.[79]

At about 9:15 a.m., another II Corps Division led by General William French reached the East Woods. French became disoriented and inadvertently launched the Union siege of D.H. Hill's division, ensconced in the ready-made trench called the Sunken Road. Their massed firepower quickly repulsed the attackers, who nevertheless returned for repeated frontal assaults. Richard Anderson's Confederate Division reinforced Hill, but Anderson was wounded before his men were properly deployed on the Road, thereby limiting their effectiveness. At about

11:00 a.m., General Israel Richardson's division relieved French's weary troops and continued their frontal attacks. They eventually advanced to a weak spot in the defensive line, which enabled them to rake the enemy with enfilade fire. The Sunken Road suddenly became a death trap for the Confederates, provoking their rapid and disorganized retreat. The corpses that remained filled the road and bore witness to their gallant three-hour resistance.[80]

At this point in the battle, General McClellan probably missed an opportunity to destroy Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, which was temporarily scattered and disorganized. After Anderson's division entered the fight, Lee had no more reserves unless A.P. Hill's division arrived promptly from Harpers Ferry. McClellan was not aware of Lee's weakness, but he still had two Army Corps of nearby reserves, which could have marched on Sharpsburg and cut off Lee's withdrawal route toward the Potomac.

McClellan, however, had already shifted his focus further south to General Ambrose Burnside's IX Corps, which had fought its way across Antietam Creek about the same time the Sunken Road was overwhelmed. Burnside had spent three hours attempting to cross the southern bridge defended by 400 men with two artillery batteries, who were finally forced to flee by 1:00 p.m. Two hours later, the better part of three Union divisions advanced against David Jones's division, the last Confederate unit available to defend the town. Within half an hour, two Union regiments had even entered Sharpsburg, and two brigades threatened the Harpers Ferry Road, the Confederates' only route for withdrawal across the Potomac.[81]

However, Lee knew that his army's situation was not as desperate as it might have seemed. At about 1:30 p.m., General A.P. Hill had arrived from Harpers Ferry and confirmed to Lee that his division's 3000 men would soon follow. Less than two hours later, Hill's lead brigade hit the IX Corps's left flank, which resisted valiantly. When three more of Hill's brigades arrived and attacked from the south and the west, the left flank began to disintegrate. All three divisions then withdrew to the west bank of Antietam Creek, where one division deployed on the nearby hills to protect the Union "beachhead."[82]

Burnside planned to renew the attack and asked for reinforcements, which McClellan refused, although he had two corps of fresh troops in close reserve. Burnside held his position the following day, even though his troops and artillery outnumbered Lee's forces by nearly two to one.

Lee held his position one more day and retreated across the Potomac into the Shenandoah Valley on the evening of September 18.[83]

This frightful battle left nearly 23,000 dead and wounded, with only slightly more casualties for the Union than for the Confederacy. The result was considered a tactical draw, even though Lee was able to hold off Union forces twice the size of those under his command. The over-cautious McClellan missed several occasions to throw in his ample reserves and to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia. Nevertheless, the battle was a strategic victory for the Union.[84]

Liberty

As Lee's forces withdrew from the battlefield, Henry was taken to Winchester, where he stayed three weeks at a private house. He later wrote to his parents:

> I was as kindly treated and cared for by the lady of the house as I could have been by you or as she could have treated her own son. Afterward, I went to Liberty, 25 miles west of Lynchburg, Va., where I rapidly recovered and made some very pleasant acquaintances.[85]

Among the pleasant acquaintances he made in Liberty (now Bedford) were Miss Lucy Breckinridge and her cousins, Miss Lettie and Miss Rosa Burwell. Lucy's uncle, William Burwell, owned the nearby Avenel Plantation, where Henry and other convalescent officers and their doctors were regular guests. The social activities at Avenel had been considerably scaled back since the pre-war years; nevertheless, plantation hospitality was a welcome change from the violence, the hardship, and the all-masculine company the young officers had endured for the past two years, especially considering the regular presence of charming and intelligent young ladies.[86]

Lucy Breckinridge was particularly impressed—nearly swept off her feet—when she met Henry Richardson:

> Later in the evening, the stage was rendered more thrillingly interesting by the appearance of Dr. Todd and Lieut. Richardson of Louisiana (!). The former looks like a good-natured Scotch terrier. I like Dr. Todd—he talks of alligators! I believe he is a beau

> of Rosa's. Lieut. Richardson appeared that evening to be a bashful man, so they all said, but I was of a different opinion. I thought of The Spectator whenever I looked at him. He is one of the most perfectly handsome men I ever saw. I would describe him, but words fail. I did not get at all acquainted with him that night, but when I did I found him to be one of the least bashful and most charming persons I ever met….
>
> At last, or at the end of two weeks, we thought it was time to tear ourselves from Avenel. We proposed to cousins Letty and Rosa, Mr. Michel, and Lieut. Richardson to come home with us, and to go from there to the Natural Bridge, to which they all agreed.[87]

Henry and Mr. Michel accompanied Lettie, Rosa, and Lucy on a tour of the local sights, winding up on November 13 at the Breckinridge Plantation in Grove Hill, across the Blue Ridge Mountains in Botetourt County. Lettie Burwell was particularly fond of Grove Hill and its setting. Many years later, she wrote:

> Of all the plantation homes we loved and visited, the brightest, sweetest memories cluster around Grove Hill, a grand old place in the midst of scenery lovely and picturesque, to reach which we made a journey across the Blue Ridge—those giant mountains from whose winding roads and lofty heights we had glimpses of exquisite scenery in the valleys below.
>
> Thus winding slowly around these mountain heights and peeping down from our old carriage windows, we beheld nature in its wildest luxuriance. The deep solitude; the glowing sunlight over rock, forest, and glen; the green valleys deep down beneath, diversified by alternate light and shadow,—all together photographed on our hearts pictures never to fade.
>
> Arrived at Grove Hill, how enthusiastic the welcome from each member of the family assembled in the front porch to meet us! How joyous the laugh! How deliciously cool the wide halls, the spacious parlor, the dark polished walnut floors! How bright the flowers! How gay the spirits of all assembled!…
>
> How delightfully passed the days, the weeks! What merry excursions, fishing-parties, riding-parties to the Indian Spring, the

> Cave, the Natural Bridge! What pleasant music, and tableaux, and dancing, in the evenings!
>
> And then came the long dark days—the days when the sun seemed to shine no more; when the eyes of wives, mothers, and sisters were heavy with weeping; when men sat up late in the night studying military tactics; when grief burdened hearts turned to God in prayer.[88]

As Lucy Breckinridge saw it, however, this excursion was a joyous revival of the golden pre-war days, which Henry's presence made even more agreeable. Too soon, however, this brief respite from the war had to end:

> Early on Saturday morning they (the Burwells, the Lieut. [Richardson] and Mr. M. [Michel]) left us—left us desolate and broken-hearted. I felt so sad at parting with the Lieut. He is so much like John was that it made us all take great interest in him, and we can never expect to see him again. I became so desperate at parting with those dear friends that I solemnly said that I would never meet anybody anymore. Oh, dear! 'Twas very sad! The clock strikes 12! I must pause in these sweet reminiscences and close my weary eyes. Dear friends of Avenel, I bid you a long, a drear farewell! May we all meet again. Will we all meet again? Time, remorseless time will tell![89]

John was Lucy's brother, who was mortally wounded in the Battle of Seven Pines. He was about a year younger than Lucy and the sibling to whom she had felt closest. "I loved him better than anyone on earth."[90]

In the next few weeks, all participants in the happy excursion across the Blue Ridge again had to face the long, dark days of winter and war. By January, Lucy would have little to assuage her loneliness but her favorite books and memories:

> But for my companions, the Japonica, Luna and violets, and my beloved friends, Addison, Steele, etc., I think I should die of ennui. The former interesting companions are living in the window, and The Spectator is constantly before my eyes. Lieut. Richardson is very much like Addison.[91]

Of course, Henry did not spend all his time at Avenel. He had arrived in Liberty by train from Winchester in mid-October. He was interned in the Liberty General Hospital, which the Confederate Army established on May 1, 1862, for the convalescent soldiers. During Henry's stay, the hospital counted about 700 patients, housed in seven requisitioned buildings, including four former tobacco factories. Patients' care was assured by five or six army doctors, including Rosa Burwell's beau, Assistant Surgeon Charles Todd. Henry's long excursion on horseback across the Blue Ridge suggests that he had recovered his health, and two weeks later, he was discharged from the hospital.[92]

Fredericksburg

From Liberty, Henry Richardson proceeded to the CSA Engineer Bureau in Richmond, where he discovered he had been promoted to Captain in recognition of his conduct at the battle of Sharpsburg. But Henry probably did not even have time to change the gold braid on his uniform before being sent into action. The Union Army of the Potomac under its new commander, General Ambrose Burnside, was then massing troops across the Rappahannock from Lee's forces at Fredericksburg, and Henry was ordered to go there and report to Brigadier General Jubal A. Early, who was then commanding Ewell's former division.[93]

Burnside had rushed 110,000 men to Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg. There, he hoped to cross the river and move toward Richmond before Lee could interpose the Army of Northern Virginia. However, Burnside's pontoon bridges were late in reaching Falmouth, and Lee had nearly 75,000 men in position on the heights surrounding Fredericksburg before Burnside was ready. Burnside decided on a direct assault against the town, which began on December 11. The problem for this main prong of the Union attack was that the troops debarked from their pontoon bridges onto an open plain, where they were exposed to the heavy fire of sharpshooters in the town and artillery on the hills behind.[94]

Burnside had also sent a smaller force across the river against Jackson's Corps to the southeast of town, and it was there that Henry found General Early and resumed his position as Division Engineer. Henry reported for duty "during the battle of 'Fredericksburg,'" which suggests that the date was between December 13, when Early's division arrived from Port Royal, and December 15, when the battle ended. In

any case, when he located division headquarters on a wooded hill near Hamilton's Crossing, Early and his staff were too busy to give him more than a perfunctory welcome. Throughout the morning of December 13, Early's division on the Confederates' far right had been subjected to a murderous Union bombardment. That same afternoon, a Pennsylvania division under General George Meade threatened to break through a gap in Jackson's lines on Early's left. Responding to Jackson's message of alert, Early sent in a succession of three brigades, which drove the Federals back until they were stopped by superior Union forces. By this time, General Franklin, commanding Union forces at this southern end of the front, had missed an opportunity to throw in his reserves and profit from Meade's brief breakthrough. Early's division remained at the front line that night and the following day, but there were no further Union threats.[95]

Further north, Union forces were sustaining heavy losses in a series of suicidal attacks against entrenched Confederate positions on the heights above Fredericksburg. By December 15, Burnside was forced to withdraw across the Rappahannock after suffering nearly 13,000 casualties and inflicting a relatively light 5000 on his opponents. Confederate forces remained on the alert, however, since unseasonably dry weather left open the possibility of a renewed Union offensive. The following day, Early's division moved south to the vicinity of Port Royal and set up their encampment on the hills overlooking the river.[96]

The Long, Cold Winter

During the calm that followed, the Engineer Corps remained busy strengthening the fortifications along the Rappahannock and the hills behind and on each side of Fredericksburg. Captain Henry Richardson was partially responsible for this effort. On January 20, he attended a review of General W.H.F. Lee's cavalry brigade near Jackson's headquarters at Moss Neck. There, he ran into Jackson's topographical engineer, Jedediah Hotchkiss, whom he had not seen since his return to the front. After the review, the two engineers spent some time together, and Hotchkiss sketched a map of the riverside for Henry. Hotchkiss was well prepared for this because Jackson had ordered him only a few days before "to get a map of the whole front line of our works and to show the disposition of our pickets, etc.…." At this point, they were still thinking about immediate tactical defense against a renewed attack by

Burnside, who was again massing troops on the other side. In fact, Burnside had planned to cross the river that very night but was thwarted by heavy rains that began at 7:00 p.m. The rains continued steadily for two more days, followed by snow. This left Union forces hopelessly bogged down in the mud, which forced Burnside to abandon his plans for a renewed offensive.[97]

Confederate forces then settled down for a long, cold winter of waiting. Morale plummeted due to extreme shortages of food and fodder. The army suffered further from illness and desertion, as men felt bound to return home and help relieve their families, who were also suffering from hunger and hardship. Jackson's Corps applied the usual measures to maintain morale and discipline. Whipping and disgrace were the usual punishments for deserters. On the positive side, there was seemingly endless drilling to prepare for dress parades and ceremonial inspections, although a shortage of shoes prevented many from drilling.[98]

There was also plenty of pick-and-shovel work to keep the men busy. On December 22, Jed Hotchkiss noted, "Our troops began throwing up entrenchments from the mouth of Massaponax Creek [near Hamilton's Crossing] down to Port Royal." Jackson's Corps was then spread out all along this 20-mile front, with D.H. Hill's division just east of Fredericksburg, followed by Taliaferro's and A.P. Hill's divisions near Moss Neck, and Early's division near Port Royal. Jackson himself chose Moss Neck for his winter headquarters. Early's sector might have been less heavily fortified than the immediate surroundings of Fredericksburg, but it still offered plenty of work for Henry to supervise.[99]

General Early recounted the work undertaken:

> After a careful examination of the country, I proceeded to fortify the banks of the river at points likely to afford facilities for crossing, and I established a line of defence also along the main road running parallel with the river, where high embankments with cedar hedges on them afforded good cover for troops and excellent breastworks…. New roads were constructed in rear of the line of defense out of reach of artillery from the opposite bank, for the purpose of facilitating communication between the different positions, and two Whitworth guns… were placed on a high hill in rear of Port Royal, for the purpose [of preventing] the

> gunboats… from ascending the river; and subsequently torpedoes (mines) were placed in the bed of the river some two or three miles below Port Royal under the superintendence of someone sent from headquarters….
>
> We were compelled to haul our supplies in wagons from Guiney's Depot on the railroad, and as the winter was a severe one with much snow and rain, the country roads, which we had to use, became almost impassible from the mud, and we were compelled to employ the men for a considerable time in corduroying them at the worst places.[100]

Guiney's Depot was about 12 miles southeast of Fredericksburg on the Richmond line and at least 20 miles from Port Royal. The railroad facilities in Fredericksburg itself were vulnerable to Federal artillery across the river and, therefore, useless. Obviously, Henry had his work cut out for him during that winter. Although Henry was untrained in military engineering, his experience in levee construction was readily transferable to the work of erecting the earthworks necessary for those and similar fortifications along the river.

In early March, Early's division was moved back to Hamilton's Crossing to replace Hood's division, which had been sent to North Carolina. On March 16 and 17, Jackson's command moved north to a location about two miles west of Hamilton's Crossing. No sooner had he arrived than Jackson's Engineering Officer, Captain James Boswell, set out to inspect the fortifications built near Fredericksburg during the winter, which were now in General Early's sector. On March 18, Captain Boswell "Rode with Wm. [William]son and Richardson around Johnson's works from Hamilton's Crossing to Falmouth" and noted that they were in "pretty good condition." Lt. Williamson was Boswell's assistant, and Johnson was probably Lt. Powell Johnson, an Engineer Officer on D.H. Hill's staff during 1863. Boswell had disagreed with General D.H. Hill about the emplacement of works on this portion of the line, which may indicate why he gave precedence to this section.[101]

Boswell, Hotchkiss, and Williamson were occasionally able to obtain leave, which offered a welcome break from the hardship of that winter. Assuming that Henry was no less favored than other junior officers, he would probably head for Richmond when he could. Richmond, too, had suffered during this long, cold winter. Early in March, Williamson was on leave in Richmond, where he probably had good connections. In

March and April, Boswell went to Richmond, where he visited his feminine cousins and other young lady friends.[102]

Many years later, Richmond socialite Edward Alfriend recalled that the wartime social scene was not entirely desolate:

> And yet during the entire war, Richmond had happy phases to its social life. Entertainments were given very freely and very liberally the first year of the war… but as the war progressed all this was of necessity given up, and we had instead what we called "starvation parties."
>
> The young ladies of the city, accompanied by their male escorts (generally Confederate officers on leave) would assemble at a fashionable residence that before the war had been the abode of wealth, and have music and plenty of dancing, but not a morsel of food or a drop of drink was seen. And this form of entertainment became the popular and universal one in Richmond. Of course no food or wine was served simply because the host could not get it or could not afford it. And at these starvation parties the young people of Richmond and the young army officers assembled and danced as brightly and happily as though a supper worthy of Lucullus awaited them.[103]

If Richmond residents in the "abodes of wealth" had to forego their sumptuous pre-war banquets, the ordinary city dwellers of Richmond and elsewhere in the Confederacy were going hungry every day in the spring of 1863. On April 2, a Richmond mob of more than 1000, mostly women, broke into shops and warehouses and took whatever food they could carry off. The riot was quelled only when President Davis appeared with a company of militia and threatened to fire on the mob. The government censored news of the riot, but took measures to make more food available for the poor. Lee's army along the Rappahannock was also short of food as well as clothing and forage for their horses. The army was reduced to half rations from March 1863. The soldiers in Hays's Louisiana brigade fared worse than most because they received no packages from home after the Union took New Orleans in 1862. Dozens of men could not even drill because they had no shoes.[104]

Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville

In April 1863, the main part of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, numbered only about 60,000, since two divisions of Longstreet's Corps were engaged in the Tidewater area to the southeast. Lee's forces were entrenched in positions running about 25 miles along the southern bank of the Rappahannock River near Fredericksburg. General Joseph Hooker, then commanding the Army of the Potomac, sought to outflank these positions by crossing the Rappahannock near Chancellorsville, about nine miles west of Fredericksburg, with about 70,000 men. At the same time, a Union force of some 40,000 under General John Sedgwick was deployed opposite Fredericksburg in an attempt to hold Lee's forces in place. When Lee figured out what was going on, he took the risk of leading most of his troops, including most of Stonewall Jackson's Corps, to face Hooker's forces at Chancellorsville. Inexplicably, "Fighting Joe" Hooker then proved reluctant to fight and pulled his numerically superior forces back to defensive positions in the woods around Chancellorsville.[105]

Despite their difficult winter, Lee's Confederates were ready to fight, and about 45,000 of them faced off against Hooker's army about two miles east of Chancellorsville on May 2. Rather than attacking Hooker's army head-on, Lee and Jackson then planned and organized one of their most daring maneuvers of the entire war. J.E.B. Stuart's cavalry had discovered that Hooker's right flank was "in the air," that is, unprotected by any other force or natural barrier. The way was open for a surprise attack on that unprotected flank, if part of Lee's army could move there undetected. And that's exactly what 28,000 men under Jackson managed to do. Jackson's movement to the left was risky because his long, thin column was exposed to attack all during their 12-mile march. One Union division did attack the column, but was beaten off by Jackson's rear guard. Hooker had warned XI Corps commanding General Oliver Howard to be ready for a possible attack on his front, but his right flank was far from ready when Jackson's attack began from the west at 5:15 p.m. "[T]he yelling rebels hit the south-facing Union regiments endwise and knocked them down like ten pins." They continued for more than a mile before the charge was stopped by their own disorganization and sporadic resistance from the Yankees. This victory, however, would be Stonewall Jackson's last. When returning from reconnaissance, General Stonewall Jackson and officers of his staff were

mistaken for the enemy, and Jackson became the victim of "friendly fire" that first cost him his arm and then his life, when he succumbed to pneumonia on May 10. The same volley also hit Jackson's Chief Engineer, Captain James Boswell, killing him instantly.[106]

The Confederates also prevailed in the fighting of May 3. During a long artillery duel, a Confederate cannonball hit Hooker's headquarters, causing a pillar to fall and knock Hooker unconscious for more than an hour. He probably suffered a concussion, which surely affected his subsequent decisions. In any case, the Battle of Chancellorsville was finished as Hooker withdrew even further, and the Confederates celebrated victory.[107]

Meanwhile, General Jubal Early had been left with some 10,000 troops to oppose Sedgwick's 40,000, who had begun to cross the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg. Since Early's defensive forces were stretched thin, Henry Richardson and other members of his staff must have been busy assuring communications among units of the widely spread line. By May 3, Sedgwick had defeated Early's forces at Marye's Hill and Lee's Hill in Fredericksburg and attempted to move against Lee's forces from the rear. Since Hooker's main force still seemed immobile and unthreatening, Lee sent two divisions to stop Sedgwick's advance at Salem Church, about halfway between Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg. At that point, Early's troops moved against Sedgewick from the east. Although Sedgewick repelled the disjointed Confederate attacks on May 4, he was aware of Hooker's plans to withdraw and therefore withdrew his own forces across the Rappahannock that same night. Hooker's army crossed the river during the night of May 5.[108]

The Battle of Chancellorsville is generally viewed as Lee's greatest victory. Although fighting on two fronts at the same time, he was able to defeat and inflict heavy losses on vastly superior Union forces and force them to abandon their spring offensive in the Virginia theatre.

Chief Engineer, Second Corps

The choice of Jackson's replacement was not an easy one. Lee finally settled on Richard Ewell, his senior division commander, who was again mobile with his new wooden leg. Ewell was promoted to Lieutenant General, commanding the Second Corps, as was A.P. Hill, commanding a new Third Corps. Longstreet remained in command of the First Corps. Ewell assumed his new command on June 1, 1863, and brought with

him several members of his previous staff, including Captain Henry B. Richardson as Chief Engineer.[109]

Henry moved over to Corps staff quarters on June 3 and joined in a mess with the Corps cartographer, Jed Hotchkiss. The two men seemed to have much in common. Both were descended from the earliest New England immigrants, both were born and raised in the North, and both still had parents there. Professionally, Hotchkiss was an autodidact, as was Henry, although he had learned a great deal from his employer, A.P. Marshall. There was also some common background in school teaching, which Henry had given up after one term, but which Hotchkiss had embraced enthusiastically as his first career. There were obvious personality differences; Hotchkiss was quite loquacious and enjoyed nothing more than an evening of good conversation, whereas Henry was not at all talkative. Although they took most of their meals together, they may not have shared a tent as Hotchkiss and Boswell did. In any case, their relationship was one of personal and professional respect; Henry later took the time to write to him while he was a prisoner of war, and Hotchkiss thought this worthy of note in his journal. If they had spent more time together, they might have become close friends, but events then unfolding ordained that Henry Richardson would spend only one busy month as Chief Engineer of the Second Corps.[110]

The Pennsylvania Campaign

Elements of Longstreet's First Corps began moving up the Rappahannock on June 3, 1863, and Ewell's Second Corps followed soon after, with headquarters breaking camp on June 5. They were headed back toward the Shenandoah Valley, where Ewell's men would be expected to clear the way for another invasion of the North. Ewell's Corps reached Front Royal in the Valley on June 12 and headed quickly toward Winchester. On June 13, Ewell and his lieutenants mounted a perfectly planned and executed attack on the strongly fortified Federal garrison, which numbered about 7000 men. While Robert Rodes's division moved north to cut off a Federal retreat, Edward Johnson's division took up positions directly south of town. Jubal Early's division climbed the mountains to the west and overpowered federal artillery positions protecting the town. Perceiving their hopeless situation, Federal troops began their retreat the following morning. Ewell had foreseen this move,

however, and had ordered Johnson's division to intercept them, which he did near Stephenson's Depot northeast of town. In all, Ewell's Corps took 4000 Union prisoners in and around Winchester.[111]

Meanwhile, Rodes's division had chased Federal troops from two small garrisons northeast of Winchester and continued pursuing them across the Potomac into Williamsport, Maryland, where Ewell joined him on June 18. Once into the Maryland panhandle, Ewell's Corps spread out and moved in north and northeasterly directions. Rodes's division and most of Johnson's moved along the Cumberland Valley, while Early's troops crossed the South Mountains and headed toward the Susquehanna River. On June 24, one of Johnson's brigades, under General Steuart, turned west toward McConnellsburg, where they hoped to capture military supplies. Captain Henry Richardson accompanied Steuart on this raid but returned the following day, reporting that the enemy had fled on their approach.[112]

The main column moved slowly into Pennsylvania, commandeering supplies along the way. All supplies were paid for in Confederate currency or certificates, and looting was forbidden. This rich harvest was more than the advancing army wished to carry, and the surplus was sent back to Winchester. By June 27, Ewell's Cumberland column had reached Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Ewell's objective was to cut the main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad and capture the State capital at Harrisburg. One of Early's brigades had already reached the Susquehanna River, and Early was preparing to move against Harrisburg from the south. Meanwhile, however, Lee had learned that the Army of the Potomac had crossed the Potomac and felt obliged to call an abrupt halt to the Second Corps's advance.[113]

Ewell's disappointment did not show in his report:

> From [Carlisle,] I sent forward my engineer, Captain [H.B.] Richardson, with General Jenkins's cavalry, to reconnoitre the defenses of Harrisburg, and was starting on the 29th for that place when ordered by the general commanding to join the main body of the army at Cashtown, near Gettysburg.[114]

Two other Engineer Officers, Captain Samuel R. Johnston from Lee's staff and Major John J.G. Clark from Longstreet's, accompanied Henry. The three probably found Jenkins near Peace Church. Two weeks earlier, Union volunteers had begun to throw up earthworks on high ground

opposite the city on the western bank of the Susquehanna River. By the time Henry arrived, the new fortifications, baptized Fort Washington, were largely completed and manned by 12,000 ill-trained militiamen. Jenkins had already sent out scouting parties on both sides of the main roads, and when he described the lay of the land to Henry, it became clear that the best viewpoint over the fortifications was from Slate Hill, just southwest of Harrisburg. Jenkins detailed a company of his cavalry to accompany Henry and his companions to "within sight of Harrisonburg (sic)" for more detailed reconnaissance. So that they might not be disturbed by Union patrols along the way, Jenkins's main force began a diversionary artillery barrage against Union picket lines sent out from Fort Washington. The barrage lasted a good two hours, sufficient for the three engineers to complete their reconnaissance.[115]

Henry's two companions returned to Carlisle that evening and reported to Ewell that Union forces around Harrisburg were scarcely prepared to meet a Confederate attack. But it was already too late. Lee's orders arrived about the same time as the reconnaissance report, and like the good soldier he was, Ewell immediately began the movement southward.[116]

It is not certain, however, that Henry Richardson returned to Carlisle on June 29 in time to leave with Ewell. The way Jed Hotchkiss wrote the entry in his diary leaves the question open:

> Captain Johnson (sic) and Major Clark (sic) came up last night and went with Richardson down to near Harrisburg, today, to reconnoiter. Johnson and Clark came back and spent the night with me.[117]

The next day, Johnston and Clarke were probably heading southeast to report to General Lee, who was traveling with Longstreet's Corps: both were Engineer Officers, Johnston on D.H. Hill's staff and Clarke on Longstreet's, and would have no reason to remain with Ewell once their mission was accomplished. Henry Richardson, however, may have had orders to stay with Jenkins in anticipation of Ewell's advance, and if so, he did not return to Carlisle until June 30. There, he and Jenkins found that Ewell had already left with Rodes's division, moving about 31 miles south to Heidlersburg, where they camped for the night. Jenkins followed them as far as Petersburg (now York Springs), which they reached about 2:00 a.m. on July 1. Jenkins's brigade did not rejoin Ewell's

Corps until late in the afternoon of July 1 at Gettysburg. Whether or not Henry Richardson spent the night with Jenkins at Petersburg, he probably rejoined Ewell's staff no later than the morning of July 1, at Heidlersburg or Middletown (now Biglerville), which Rodes's division had reached toward 10:00 a.m. that morning. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Henry Richardson remained with Ewell, or at his disposition, throughout the Second Corps's engagements of July 1, 1863.[118]

Gettysburg

On the morning of July 1, the three divisions of Ewell's Second Corps were proceeding southward by separate roads to join Lee at Cashtown. At Middletown, Ewell received word from A.P. Hill that his Third Corps had observed Union cavalry to the west of Gettysburg, and that he was marching to their encounter. Ewell immediately redirected his troops towards Gettysburg. By then, Henry Heth's division of the Third Corps was already meeting stiff resistance from Union forces west of Gettysburg. Two brigades of Union cavalry managed to hold off the superior Confederate force until units of the Union I Corps arrived and took up positions west of town about 10:00 a.m. Heth's division was soon engaged in a full-blown battle with the Union I Corps, which repelled several Confederate attacks. This was the situation when Ewell arrived on the scene at about noon on July 1 and installed himself on Oak Hill, northwest of Gettysburg, from where he observed the rest of the day's fighting.[119]

Henry Richardson, who was probably with Ewell that morning, must also have seen the whole battlefield from the top of Oak Hill. What he saw at midday was not encouraging. Heth's two brigades had been repulsed. Robert Rodes rapidly deployed his division on Oak Hill and on either side of that height as he prepared to hit the flank of the Union I Corps from the north. But Rodes's initial attacks were poorly organized; the Union I Corps stopped them cold and inflicted heavy losses on three Confederate brigades. Meanwhile, Heth had reassembled his forces and thrown two additional brigades against the southern flank of the I Corps. This renewed attack forced the defenders to withdraw from McPherson Ridge and set up a new line on Seminary Ridge, their last defendable position west of Gettysburg.[120]

Meanwhile, Rodes regrouped and reinforced his battered brigades on Oak Hill and prepared for another assault against the northern wing of

the I Corps, now massed on Oak Ridge to the south. At that moment, about 3:30 p.m., he observed masses of Federal troops, the Union XI Corps, pouring out of the north side of town. Rodes then moved his last brigade to the east, facing the new arrivals, in the hope of holding them off until Jubal Early's division could reach the scene. Ewell quickly dispatched his aide and cousin, Campbell Brown, who urged Early to move faster. Early's division arrived from the northeast just in time to turn the tide, and the two divisions drove the Union forces back through Gettysburg, capturing more than 5000 prisoners.[121]

The Union I and XI Corps withdrew to a series of hills south of town, where their reserves had already begun erecting defensive positions and massing artillery. Ewell considered seizing Cemetery Hill, directly opposite the town. But before his two divisions could be reorganized for an attack, the Union position had been strengthened. Ewell decided to await the arrival of Johnson's division, which was still several miles away. When Johnson arrived, Ewell's attention had turned to Culp's Hill, which curved around to the east. Ewell ordered Johnson to seize this hill if he found it still unoccupied. By the time Johnson's division was ready, the Federals had moved in force to occupy Culp's Hill, and Johnson withheld his attack, waiting for further orders. Ewell is often blamed for the Second Corps's failure to seize Culp's Hill on the evening of July 1, when it was still lightly held. Whether the fault was Ewell's or his subordinates', the senior officer in command obviously bears the ultimate responsibility.[122]

In any case, the morning of July 2 found Culp's Hill firmly under Union control. Lee's plan for the day called for Longstreet, supported by Hill, to attack the Union left, where Lee believed their defensive positions to be less advantageous. Ewell's Corps was to mount a diversion against Culp's and Cemetery Hills on the Union right and to attack in force if circumstances were favorable. Johnson's and Early's divisions were ready to go from the morning onward, but had to wait impatiently for most of the day until Longstreet launched his attack. While waiting, Ewell rode out with Henry Richardson to the southeastern edge of town near positions occupied by Hays's brigade, where they thought they would have a better view of the fortifications on Cemetery Hill. Although warned by Hays's men that they were heading into the range of sniper fire, Ewell thought the enemy lines were too distant for accuracy and ignored the warning. They had hardly gone 20 paces when Henry was seriously wounded, and Ewell was shot in his wooden leg.[123]

Eighteen months later, Henry wrote:

> At the battle of Gettysburg on the second day I was wounded in the right side of my back, (about the point of the shoulder blade) the ball passing in and bruising my left lung, and still remaining in there somewhere.[124]

Donald Pfanz, in Appendix J of his biography, *Richard S. Ewell: A Soldier's Life*, made a convincing case for July 3 being the most probable date for Ewell's wooden leg "wound." More recently, however, after seeing a transcript of Henry's letter stating that he was wounded on "the second day," Pfanz has agreed in direct communication with the author that Henry's account tips the balance in favor of July 2.

The story of Ewell's wooden leg wound is usually considered a simple curiosity. Still, it must have distracted him at a time when he should have been giving his full attention to preparing for the forthcoming attack. Not only did he have to find and strap on his spare prosthesis, but he also wished to ensure prompt medical attention for Henry, whose advice and aid he had come to value highly. In his Report on the Gettysburg campaign, Ewell wrote:

> Capt. H.B. Richardson, chief engineer, was severely wounded at Gettysburg, and was left, I regret to say, in the enemy's hands—a loss I have very seriously felt ever since that engagement.[125]

Longstreet's attack finally began about 4:00 p.m. As planned, Johnson's and Early's divisions then began their diversionary assaults on Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill. Both managed to gain footholds but were obliged to fall back. Early's men might even have been able to hold Cemetery Hill, but Rodes was not able to organize his weakened division in time to support them. Longstreet also failed to break the Union line on the right. On July 3, Ewell concentrated forces from all three of his divisions against Culp's Hill under Johnson's command, but Johnson made little headway against strongly manned Union fortifications and withdrew when he heard reports of a Union flanking movement on his left. General George Meade had foreseen that Lee would attack the center and concentrated his forces where they threw back Pickett's ill-fated charge with disastrous losses. The decisive Union victory at Gettysburg on July 3, followed by the surrender of Vicksburg in the West

to Ulysses S. Grant on July 4, marked turning points in the war and increased the likelihood that the Confederate struggle for independence would be defeated.[126]

From the evening of July 1, Gettysburg had become one giant hospital, and Confederate doctors must have been overwhelmed by the massive influx of the wounded. General Ewell had no doubt assured that Henry Richardson received prompt and competent attention, which probably saved his life. Henry was perhaps not aware of the Confederate defeat on that evening of July 3. Nor could he know that, although the war would thunder on for almost two more bloody years, his part in the conflict was finished.

Chapter 8
Prison and Surrender

As General Lee prepared the withdrawal of his forces from Gettysburg, one of his first orders was to form a wagon train to transport the Confederate wounded back to Virginia. By 4:00 p.m. on July 4, the caravan left Gettysburg carrying more than 12,000 wounded men, most of whom eventually reached field hospitals near Winchester, Virginia. Henry Richardson, however, became one of 6800 wounded Confederate prisoners cared for by the medical services of the Army of the Potomac. When added to the wounded of the Union Army, they made a total of nearly 21,000 to be cared for by the 650 Union Medical Officers available at Gettysburg. While a ratio of 32 patients per doctor was perhaps "not bad" considering Civil War conditions, this ratio worsened considerably when many of these Medical Officers left to accompany Meade's forces as they followed the Army of Northern Virginia into Maryland. Given the delicate nature of Henry's wound, it seems a miracle that he survived and was strong enough to endure the long and uncomfortable train ride to New York.[1]

> My condition was considered such that it would be dangerous to move me, and I was consequently left behind at a farm house where we had established a hospital. In a few days I was removed to David's Island [New York], where John came to see me, and since that time you have been familiar with my monotonous history.[2]

Within three weeks, Henry had recovered enough of his ordinary good humor to write the following from the U.S. War Department's General Hospital at Davids Island, New York:

A.P. Marshall, Esq.
Dear Sir,
Mr. Lincoln has kindly invited me to this fashionable watering place to enjoy his hospitality and recover from my wounds.
I should like very much to hear from you, and know how and where you are.
Mr. Lincoln insists that I must be his guest during my stay at the North, or I should do myself the honor of paying you a visit.
Yours truly,
Henry B. Richardson
Capt. Engineers, C.S.A.[3]

Unwavering Dedication

It seems curious that Henry should write his first letter as a prisoner to Marshall rather than to his family. Much later, he tried to explain his state of mind:

> I know you think it very strange that I did not at once write to you when I had the opportunity, and I presume I was wrong in not doing so. I reasoned, however, in this way: "They have not heard of me in so long a time that very likely they think me dead, or at least forever lost, and if so they have already mourned for me and are beginning to be comforted; for sorrow is not eternal, and time blunts the edge of even the keenest grief. It would be cruel to write to them now and resurrect myself, wounded and a prisoner, in a condition that they will imagine a thousand times worse than reality. That will only give them pain, and it is far better to leave the subsiding waters untroubled—and the war cannot last always, and if I survive it, as I hope to, well and good —we shall all be the happier—if not, it will only be what they have long supposed, and when they learn the truth they will be prepared for it."[4]

The real reason he had not written, however, was the seeming impossibility of explaining to his parents the reasons for his allegiance to the South, especially when his letters were subjected to military censorship and limited to one page:

> I would not willingly say one word that you might consider harsh, or even in the slightest manner wound your sensibilities. I KNOW that you cannot see this matter in the light in which I view it, and that you would be as far or a thousand times farther than I, from any compromise with sin or baseness, that you believed to be such.[5]

A.P. Marshall, Henry's former employer and mentor, apparently guessed that Henry would be reticent about reestablishing contact with his family and decided to forward Henry's letter to Henry's brother with this short and barely legible note:

> Chicago Aug 6 [1863]
> Dear John,
> The letter _____ foregoing page has just been forwarded to me here. I enclose it to you for fear he may not have apprized you of his locality. He was wounded in the fight at Gettysburg. Try by all means to persuade him to abandon this cursed rebellion. You may use just as _____ _____ __ __ _____ as you choose & I will enclose it. Where David's Island is I know not but I believe it to be near N.Y. I shall write him at once. I have just succeeded in getting the citizens of St. Joseph released from the Mil. Prison at Alton Ill. They have gone home a wiser and more loyal set as well as happier. I hope Henry may be induced to remain North. I had 10 citizens of St Joseph released and they have gone home rebels no longer. I am continuously getting letters from Southern acquaintances in limbo asking for _____ _____ ____ __ ____ ____ ____. I am too poor myself in consequence of their acts to respond to such ____. If I can be of any service to yourself or your father or can act in conjunction with you in Henry's case, command me at any moment, for he is like a brother to me.[6]

Marshall referred to the Tensas Parish officials who were released from the Alton Military Prison on August 1, 1863. When Grant's army marched through Tensas Parish in the spring of 1863, they found the elected officials of the Parish to be uncooperative and summarily imprisoned nine of those leading citizens, including Thomas Prince Farrar. A.P. Marshall tried his best to maintain good relations with the officials of Tensas Parish because he had not yet been paid some $90,000 for the

work he had completed on the Tensas Parish levees just before the war broke out. (See Chapter 6.)[7]

Henry's family, however, had no success in their attempts to convince Henry to give up the fight. While still at Davids Island on August 27, he wrote to his parents:

> That I should be the cause of so much trouble to all for whom I would wish happiness, is the occasion of more pain to me than I have ever known before. That you should wish me to give up the only object on earth (except _____ _____) for which I _____ have cared for more than a moment—an object that I regard more than life—an object to whose defense I am bound, alike by my convictions of its justness, my solemn oath, and what I believe to be the best and most honorable instincts of my nature—that you should wish me to abandon this, makes me sadder yet. I cannot believe that you would really wish it if you considered the matter in a proper light. I cannot believe that you would counsel me to foreswear myself or be guilty of perjury—and yet to do as you intimate would be both one and the other. All the sophistry of hell can make it nothing else. So let me beg of you—do not again speak of such a thing.[8]

Henry's grandfather also tried persuasion and prayer and assured Henry's parents of his support.

> We were very glad that John called on you and told you all about Henry. Poor child! Into what gross delusions he has been led…. I wrote to him that God had answered our prayers in two respects in regard to him, in sparing his life and in delivering him from the rebels, and we should continue to pray that he might not return to them.[9]

The family persisted in their efforts throughout Henry's imprisonment, even sending a personal emissary, who failed to convince Henry that he should transfer his allegiance to the North. Henry wrote from Johnson's Island, Ohio, on January 31, 1865:

> I most earnestly hope that hereafter, you may spare yourselves the trouble, and me the annoyance of the interference of any third

> party. You must not think me ungrateful in complaining of what I know was kindly meant; for I certainly am thankful for your good intentions toward me; but could you know how utterly disgusting to me is any contact or dealing with the person you commissioned to catechize me as to my condition, I am sure you would spare me his kind offices. He may be the best of men, but I certainly have no use for him, or any like him.[10]

Although Henry repulsed any effort to reconcile him with his nation, the Richardson family bonds remained as strong as ever during these last years of the war. As Henry's father wrote when it was all over:

> I need not tell you that these changes have not at all diminished in the hearts of your parents or your brother or your sister their love to you. Never have we been more earnestly desirous of your welfare than now.[11]

Prison Life

When Henry had recovered sufficiently, he was again placed on a train that lumbered westward to Ohio. At Sandusky, on the shore of Lake Erie, he reached the end of the railroad line. He was then herded on board a small steamer, probably along with other Confederate officers captured at Gettysburg and elsewhere. After a brief cruise, they arrived at the Johnson's Island Prisoner of War Depot, which was to be Henry's enforced residence for nearly one and a half years. This was a new facility that had opened in April 1862 and served mainly as a military prison for Confederate Officers. The island lies in Sandusky Bay, Lake Erie, about three miles north of Sandusky, Ohio, and a half mile south and west of the Marblehead Peninsula. It is a small, flat, heavily wooded piece of land, about a half mile wide by one mile long. The War Department chose the location because it was relatively isolated yet close to the railhead at Sandusky. After debarking on the island, the prisoners discovered their quarters in one of 12 prison blocks, or barracks, inside a wooden stockade 12 feet high. The prison blocks were two-story wooden buildings, most of which were divided into three rooms on each floor, with kitchens at each end of the buildings. The prisoners generally slept on three-tiered bunk beds. The average number of prisoners at Johnson's Island was probably 2000 to 2500. After exchanges

of prisoners ceased in 1863, however, the number grew by January 1865 to 3200, which exceeded the prison's planned capacity.[12]

When Henry arrived, the prison barracks were not yet overcrowded, as they would become later. On the other hand, Henry must have found the barracks and their surroundings disgustingly filthy. The first Union Commanding Officer seemed incapable of organizing routine maintenance, and the Confederate officers, many of them southern aristocrats, were not used to cleaning up after themselves. The latrines behind the prison blocks were also obnoxious and unsanitary due to the poor drainage of the island's subsoil. A Union Medical Officer inspected the facility in January 1864 and found the barracks, kitchens, privies, and surroundings to be filthy and insalubrious. He blamed the situation on the laziness of the prisoners; however, the Commanding Officer of the Depot was replaced shortly after the inspection. Presumably, prison conditions then improved, notably with the addition of two large mess halls that replaced the barracks' kitchens and made it easier to manage kitchen garbage.[13]

Despite unsanitary conditions, Henry claimed to be in good health throughout his stay:

> I am sorry you will continue to feel troubled about the state of my health. Believe me, I am well, bodily, and I hope as sound in mind as usual. To be sure this is not exactly the place to find the fountain of health (except for sufferers from intemperance or gluttony) and I can't recommend it to my invalid friends as a particularly desirable resort at any season—especially for winter, but there are worse places, even in this world, and a man who will keep himself clean, and in good spirits, may reasonably calculate on holding his own for several years. At least such is my hope unless sooner exchanged, which latter I have by no means despaired of. Generally speaking, I have plenty of reading matter, or can easily obtain it. Occasionally I attempt to study a little (Latin, Mathematics, etc.) but lack energy and make slight progress….[14]

Despite the assurances that he gave his parents, Henry certainly suffered from boredom and frustration at not being able to rejoin the fight. As his confinement dragged on, Henry's thoughts inevitably turned to possibilities of escape. About a dozen prisoners succeeded in escaping from the island, some through various stratagems such as

disguising themselves as workers, and others by climbing the wall when the guards' vigilance was impaired by winter weather and walking across the frozen lake to the mainland. Henry apparently planned to swim the half mile from the island to the Marblehead Peninsula, as suggested by the following letter, which must have been handed to him by a visiting Confederate sympathizer:

Dear Captain Richardson,

I have thought a great deal about our conversation yesterday, & the more I think of it, the more anxious I feel for your account, not mine for "aiding or abetting" in any way so smart a scheme. I think it must fail, & if it fails, then the consequences will be most painful, not only to yourself, but to your fellow prisoners if, indeed, the attempt does not prove fatal to you. You have not taken into consideration the currents of the channel which you must cross. They are very strong at certain tides, & weakened as you must be by your wound and long confinement, I fear you could not _____ them. Take a friend's advice, the advice I would give my dear brother, Robert ___ were he in your painful position. Be patient and wait. The brighter day will come, &, I think, shortly. Bear your misfortunes till then as so many other gallant spirits are bearing the same trial. It is better to suffer a while, than risk life, if life is dear, then give it a chance. This may seem very unsympathizing, but, believe me, I do not underrate the ennui & real suffering of your situation & that of your brave companions. If any sacrifice that I could make could relieve your _____, and send you back to our common country for whose cause you have all sacrificed so much, it would give me more happiness than anything else on earth, but I am very sure that those who care most for you, could they speak, would say now as I do, wait!

I have made inquiries to find whether I could possibly help you in the way you desire, & last night, I saw the only person __ ___, on whom I could rely, & learned that he was to leave town for Washington this morning, whence his return is uncertain. But, instead, N.Y. would be no place for you; anywhere in New Jersey would be better. I wish I could help you, but save by very good wishes & prayers, I am wholly powerless. Take my advice; do not make the attempt.

> You have been active in a just cause, now you are called upon to suffer for the same & good might come of it in some way—if it be only by the learning of a life of patience and self control that, at some time or other of our lives, we all have to learn.
>
> Sincerely your friend,[15]

Henry may have been part of an elaborate escape plan organized both inside and outside the prison. In September 1864, Confederate spy John Yeats Beall, aided by some 30 sympathizers recruited in Canada, seized a small steamship, *The Philo Parsons*, as it made its regular voyage from Detroit to Sandusky. With the help of fellow spy Charles H. Cole in Sandusky, Beall planned to seize the gunboat *USS Michigan*, which they would use to take control of the prison. Cole was also said to have infiltrated several spies among the prison guards. Inside the prison, 500 of the most determined prisoners, organized in cells of ten men, were ready to storm the prison gates. The plot was foiled at the last minute when Federal authorities learned of the conspiracy, arrested Cole, and placed the crew of the *USS Michigan* on alert.[16]

One of the prisoners later wrote:

> We were organized into companies and regiments and had armed ourselves with clubs, which were made of stove wood and other material at hand, with which to make a fight. I think I was a captain in the organization, for I occupied some position by which I had information of the contemplated movement. I remember I had several conferences with the Colonel as to my duties, and we were in constant expectation of orders, which never came, to make the fight. It surely would have been a pitiable affair, for the undertaking was wholly impracticable.[17]

Conditions at Johnson's Island were considered the best of any prisoner of war camp, North or South, but they were far from ideal, as Henry wrote to his parents after his release:

> I do not intend to complain at all of the treatment I have received during my imprisonment, though I honestly believe it to be no better than—not even as good, as compared with the means at the command of the two governments—as that received by the inmates of Libby Prison, and the pen at Andersonville, about

> which so much has been said in the newspapers. The U.S. government inaugurated a system of treatment of prisoners never before heard of in civilized warfare, and the Confederate States was a long time in following its example. In all former wars, Officers becoming prisoners of war have been released upon parole, and my govt. did it to my certain knowledge, in the early part of the war, and long after the U.S. had fixed upon the policy of treating officers, if possible, worse than enlisted men, and confining and starving all. But I said I was not going to complain of it, and I am not. May the Lord forgive them, for I never can.[18]

Formal exchanges of prisoners, both officers and enlisted men, had been going on since July 1862. In May 1863, however, the Confederate Congress authorized the execution or enslavement of Black Union prisoners, a policy that President Davis had announced four months earlier. When the Confederates refused to budge from this position, Secretary of War Stanton ordered the end of prisoner exchanges. Following public outrage over the treatment of Union prisoners at Andersonville and elsewhere, Secretary Stanton ordered that POW rations be reduced to levels prevailing in the Confederate Army. The reported horrors of southern POW camps brought mounting pressure on the Union to resume exchanges. Still, Lincoln, Stanton, and Grant held fast to the principle that exchanges must include all prisoners, regardless of color. Grant, in particular, resisted because returning prisoners would be quickly recycled back into the Confederate Army. In January 1865, the rebels, who by then were about to begin recruiting Black soldiers for their own army, finally gave in and offered to exchange all prisoners. Exchanges rapidly resumed, thus enabling Henry Brown Richardson and thousands of other prisoners to be paroled and many to be exchanged over the next few months.[19]

The Agony

> I arrived in Richmond on the 22nd of March and rec'd a leave of absence "for thirty days unless sooner exchanged." Stopped in Richmond, at Gen'l Ewell's house for ten days, and on the first of April went to Bedford Co., Va. (west of Lynchburg) where I remained till the first of May. Then over the mountains to

> Botetourt Co. and spent a week, and on the eighth started on horseback for this side of the Mississippi, or wherever I could get to anything like a Confederacy.[20]

In the middle of March 1865, Union guards offloaded another train full of Confederate prisoners and herded them into temporary prison barracks near the James River, where they would be processed for exchange against a comparable number of Union prisoners. The officers among them, including Captain Henry Brown Richardson, perhaps received more consideration, but very little more, than the ordinary soldiers. They had reached the busiest port on the North American continent, not New York and not Boston, but City Point, Virginia, the headquarters and main supply base for the Union armies besieging Richmond and Petersburg, just a few miles up the James River. The prisoners might not have seen much of the port's teeming activity, but what they did see must have inspired awe, if not despair, at the immense resources of their enemy.[21]

Certainly, emotions were mixed as the prisoners anticipated the joys of reunion and the anxiety of a probable return to combat. But this final delay was shorter than they had supposed, as the military bureaucrats rushed to complete the paperwork for the exchange and make way for the next trainload of prisoners. Finally, the first of two Confederate flag-of-truce steamers hove to at the exchange landing. The exchange commissioners for each side negotiated the final details of the exchange. The first boatload of Union prisoners was marched ashore, and their Confederate counterparts took their places on board.

Soon after he arrived in Richmond, Henry reported to army headquarters and was given leave for 30 days unless exchanged sooner. He had been released on parole; that is, he had given his word of honor that he would not resume active military service until the Confederate Army had released an imprisoned Union officer or several enlisted men in exchange for him. Since this exchange never happened, Henry was honor-bound to stand by and watch helplessly as the Confederacy disintegrated.[22]

During the next ten days, Henry had a top-level view of this agony while staying at the home of General Ewell in Richmond. If Henry was surprised by the ravages that age and illness had worked on Ewell, he never mentioned it. Ewell had relinquished his command of the Second Corps at the end of May 1864 due to illness, and after his recovery, Lee

placed him in charge of the Richmond District garrison. During the winter of 1864, Ewell had taken lodgings a few blocks from the capitol with quarters for his family and his staff. In February 1865, he began to prepare for an eventual evacuation of the city. About the same time, he sent his wife and stepdaughter to safety with friends in St. Louis.[23]

By the end of March 1865, the Army of Northern Virginia had begun to collapse. On April 2, Lee evacuated Petersburg and ordered Ewell to evacuate Richmond after burning stores of cotton, tobacco, and military supplies. With army headquarters now caught up in the turmoil of retreat, Henry had no hope of being exchanged in time to resume his place on Ewell's staff, and he left Richmond on Saturday, April 1, heading west.[24]

General Ewell completed the evacuation of Richmond early on the morning of April 3 and withdrew his forces to Amelia Courthouse, about 40 miles to the southwest. There, he joined Lee's army, which had escaped to the northwest after evacuating Petersburg. Lee planned to head southwest toward Danville, hoping to join forces with General Joseph E. Johnston in North Carolina. For once, the Union armies moved too quickly for him. General Philip Sheridan's cavalry and three infantry Corps advanced on Lee's southern flank, cut the railway line to Danville, and forced Lee to turn west toward Lynchburg. On April 6, Ewell was surrounded and captured at Sayler's Creek along with 2800 of his men. The Federals took a total of 6000 prisoners during that battle, thereby ending any further possibility that the Confederates might fight their way out of the ring forming around them. With the remnants of his army surrounded by Union forces five times more numerous than his, Lee surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865.[25]

Meanwhile, Henry had arrived at the town of Liberty (now Bedford), 43 miles due west of Appomattox and less than two miles beyond Lynchburg. He had taken some of the same roads along which the Army of Northern Virginia attempted to flee a few days later. It is tempting to speculate that he was carrying on some sort of reconnaissance or courier duty, but this seems unlikely, as it would have violated the terms of his parole. In any event, Lee did not decide to turn west toward Lynchburg until April 5, when Henry had already reached his destination. One obvious reason Henry headed west on April 1 was that he was least likely to encounter Federal forces in this area. More important were the personal reasons that led him there.

Liberty, the seat of Bedford County, was where Henry had gone to recuperate from the wound he received at the battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam) and where he had "made some very pleasant acquaintances." (See Chapter 7.) The people he had met in Bedford County had become more than simple acquaintances. At least one of them had made a special effort to reestablish contact with him by placing the following advertisement in a Baltimore newspaper:

> Liberty, Va., July 27, 1864
>
> MAJOR HENRY B. RICHARDSON, Engineer Corps, Ewell's Staff.—Wounded and left on the field at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863. Supposed to be at Johnson's Island. Why don't you write? Have sent you many letters. So anxious to hear from you. Old circle unbroken. All miss you. R., your old physician hopes to take your case in hand again, and would like to know if you have employed a new physician. AVENEL.

A person named M.B. Rhodes in Baltimore had sent the ad to Henry at Johnson's Island with an offer to transmit a reply.[26]

Rosa Burwell, about 1865.

Thus, Henry returned to Avenel, hoping to find his place once again as a link in the "old circle" and perhaps to seek the care of his "old physician," who was certainly Rosa Burwell. Henry received a warm welcome from members of the old circle, but nothing was quite the same. For one thing, if there was ever any romantic attraction between Henry and Rosa Burwell, that interesting young lady had grown tired of waiting. Less than two months before, she had married Dr. Charles H. Todd, her patient suitor of several years' standing, and was already preparing a move to her new husband's homeland in Kentucky.[27]

If Henry was hoping to find others in the old circle who were ready to carry on the struggle for the Confederacy, he was bound to be disappointed. The long succession of defeats during the preceding six months had sapped their will to fight. Henry was still of a mind to continue, but

few others were as resolute as he. Some may have thought about organizing resistance in guerrilla bands, but Lee had rejected such action as too destructive for a population already exhausted by four years of wartime privations. Guerrilla warfare would lead to widespread devastation, as had happened in the Shenandoah Valley. Most of the old circle seemed ready to accept Lee's decision at Appomattox, consoled by the notion that they had fought the good fight and the prospect that they might be restored to an honorable place in the Union. Those still young and optimistic, such as Rosa and Dr. Charles Todd, would want nothing more than to get on with their new lives.[28]

After the initial warmth of reunion, Henry's month at Avenel must have degenerated into a time of indecision as news drifted in from the remnants of the Confederacy. The news was not good. General Joseph Johnston surrendered his command to Sherman on April 26. Jefferson Davis sought vainly to find the means to continue the war but was forced to flee from Danville to Greensborough, North Carolina, and then to Charlotte before turning west in the hope of reaching the last remnant of the Confederacy in the Trans-Mississippi District. He was captured, however, near Abbeville, Georgia on May 10.[29]

Henry still had not given up hope. On May 1, he left Liberty and headed west over the mountains to Botetourt County, where, if only by simple courtesy, he would have called on the Breckinridges of Grove Hill. The Burwell girls of Avenel corresponded regularly with their cousins at Grove Hill, who would have been expecting a visit from Henry as he made his way westward. Lucy Breckinridge was particularly eager to see her "Spectator" again. Three months before, she had married Lieutenant Thomas Jefferson Basset after a courtship and engagement of more than a year. Lucy was very much in love with her new husband. Still, she had been so taken with Henry when she met him nearly three years before that she surely felt more than a tingle of excitement when he again appeared on the front porch of Grove Hill. We can only guess about her feelings because she had stopped writing her maiden's diary shortly before her marriage. Then, on June 16, 1865, little more than a month after Henry's visit, she fell ill and died of typhoid fever.[30]

Henry stayed only a week in Botetourt County. On May 8, he "started on horseback for [the far] side of the Mississippi, or wherever I could get to anything like a Confederacy," but time and Confederate territory were running out fast. Four days earlier, the officer who had

recommended Henry for a commission, General Richard Taylor, then commanding the Mississippi and Alabama District, surrendered the last remaining Confederate troops east of the Mississippi.[31]

From Grove Hill, Henry Richardson headed southwest on horseback along the spine of the Appalachian Mountains, probably along much the same path as today's U.S. Route 11. He progressed without incident for about 200 miles into the northeast corner of Tennessee. There, he was to find that the peace terms Generals Grant and Lee had agreed upon at Appomattox might not apply to him.

His first misfortune fell when he learned that the Federal garrison in Jonesborough was confiscating all branded horses, even those with private brands like the one borne by his horse. Therefore, before entering the town, he sold his horse for a bundle of state banknotes, which he later found were worth about $1.60.[32]

This was only the beginning of his troubles:

> So there I was several hundred miles from anywhere, and without money or friends. I walked into Jonesboro and the Provost Marshall's office, gave him my name, showed him my leave of absence, which stated that I was a paroled prisoner, and Mr. Provost said: "Certainly it was all right" and gave me an order for transportation to Knoxville [about 90 miles to the Southwest] according to their published statement, that any of the army of No. Va. coming in to any military post, would receive the same terms as those surrendered, viz., "transportation and subsistence to their homes, there to remain on parole, unmolested till exchanged." As I was already paroled he said I needed no new parole, and sent me on my way rejoicing.[33]

The terms of surrender accorded to the Army of Northern Virginia were roughly as follows: "The officers to give their individual paroles not to take up arms against the government of the United States until properly exchanged, and each company or regimental commander to sign a like parole for the men of their commands," … neither "side arms of the officers nor their private horses or baggage" to be surrendered. Henry Richardson, however, was not part of any Confederate Army at the time of surrender but was a paroled prisoner of war awaiting exchange. And since all Confederate forces except those in the Trans Mississippi Department had surrendered by then, there was little prac-

tical possibility that Henry or other paroled officers would ever be officially exchanged. The officers of the military government in Tennessee were perhaps in a quandary as to how they should treat returning Confederate soldiers and decided to lock them up until the situation was clarified.[34]

Henry's letter continues:

> But at Strawberry Plains (twelve miles from Knoxville [actually 18 miles] my joy was turned into sorrow, and I, with several hundred others, in a large pasture where we lived like Nebuchadnezzar till seven times had passed over us, and I became sick with diarrhea, chills and fever and whatnot. When these seven times or days were passed we were sent to Chattanooga, and quartered in a prison pen like a small edition of Johnson's Island. There they were continually bringing in and taking out squads of men, for what purpose I didn't know. At last after three or four days I was marched out with a squad of fifty, which was formed in line at the Provost Marshall's Office, and a young man comes out and reads the oath of allegiance to us and explains that they didn't desire or request any man to take it—that it is entirely voluntary, as indeed the oath itself expressly sets forth. Having made these explanations the Provost Marshall says: "Those who wish to take this oath, step one pace forward"—Your unhappy son and two other "desperate rebels" standing by him did not move: the rest of the line stepped forward as one man. Then was the Provost in great wrath, and with a fiery countenance and many oaths (not of allegiance) sprang forward saying "_____" (profanity omitted) "You don't want to take the oath?" "No sir" mildly replied your unfortunate son "I wish to be paroled according to the agre…. There follows two pages of cursing by the enraged Provost and a command to the guard to "take these men up to No. ___." Meanwhile the other two men were trying to explain to him that it was by mistake that they didn't move forward, and that they desired to take the oath of allegiance and "rally round the dear old flag again" of all things on earth. But the Pro. was deaf to their cries, and we three like Shadrack, Meshac, and Obednego, were cast neck and heels into a place seven times hotter and worse than any I have ever seen or expect to see if I escape the torments of regions infernal. A sort of

> dungeon with grated windows full of robbers, thieves, murderers, cut-throats, bushwhacks, deserters, men in fetters, manacles, balls and chains, filthy, covered with vermin and smelling like a charnel house. Such were our quarters—I had been sick—. The newspapers said Kirby Smith had disbanded his army—President Davis was captured—My companions were reproaching me for having gotten them into a bad position, and persuading me that "it was no use for one man to try to be the Confederacy," and so taking it all together, after a day and a half of that life, having another opportunity, I went out and worshipped the great golden image, and became a prostitute—and that is what is called taking the oath voluntarily…. Don't imagine that I have any idea of disregarding my oath from what I say—I only mean that there are thousands of people who in such cases consider oaths of no force…. For my own part, though my oath of allegiance to the U.S. Gov't cannot change the desires and emotions of my heart, I intend, having taken it, to keep it as faithfully as I can, so long as I am a resident of the country. There is no casuistry that to me can justify the breaking of an oath, and it was my greatest objection to taking the oath of allegiance to the U.S. that I felt that so long as a Confederate flag was flying anywhere there might be a Confederate Government, and I could not while it existed violate my allegiance to it…. But enough of that—I cannot make myself appear as having played other than a very weak part or as anything better than a prostitute….[35]

On June 6, 1865, shortly after Henry's release, the War Department issued General Order No. 109, which clarified the situation by formally authorizing the release of most prisoners up to and including the grade of Captain upon their signature of an Oath of Allegiance.[36]

By the time Henry signed the Oath, there was indeed nothing that resembled a Confederate government except in name only. On May 18, General Edmund Kirby Smith, commanding the Trans Mississippi Department, had ordered the transfer of his headquarters from Shreveport, Louisiana, to Houston, apparently hoping that the State of Texas could continue the war on its own. Further resistance was impossible, however, as the remaining troops in the West were deserting in increasing numbers and taking with them mules, horses, and any other CSA property that could easily be moved. On May 26, 1865, the day that

Henry signed the Oath, Kirby Smith's Chief of Staff, General Simon B. Buckner, signed a military convention, agreeing, subject to Kirby Smith's approval, to the surrender of all Confederate forces west of the Mississippi. Kirby Smith ratified the document on June 2, 1865.[37]

By that time, there was nothing for Henry Richardson to do but to go on home—to the only place he was willing to call home, St. Joseph, Louisiana. Fortunately, the Union Army was making massive efforts to provide free transportation for all demobilized Confederate soldiers. Once Henry had signed the Oath of Allegiance, the army sent him on his way to Nashville. There, on May 31, the Department of the Cumberland gave him a "Citizen's Pass," mentioning that he had signed the Oath and authorizing transportation as far as Memphis, Tennessee. The first leg of this trip was down the Cumberland River to Smithland, Kentucky, where the Cumberland joins the Ohio River. On June 4, he received a further transportation order from Smithland to Cairo, Illinois, where the Ohio joins the Mississippi. From there, it is not clear how he made it back to St. Joseph; according to family tradition, he arrived penniless at some Mississippi port, where he ran into an acquaintance who advanced him enough money to complete his voyage home.[38]

Chapter 9
Reconstruction

After his difficult voyage across half a continent, Henry returned to a hero's welcome in St. Joseph, Louisiana, his adopted land. Stingy with details as always, Henry tells us nothing about his hospitable friends. St. Joseph was small enough that he had acquired at least a nodding acquaintance with many of the leading citizens during the year of his pre-war residence, but he found many more friends when he returned in his tattered captain's uniform than when he left as a lowly recruit. The simple fact of this native Yankee's return to Tensas Parish proved that he had been and continued to be willing to sacrifice everything for "The Cause."

> I arrived here on the 8th, and was very kindly received by my old friends, and might live about from house to house for an indefinite period: but am getting tired of this inactivity.[1]

Henry had drawn upon his last reserves of energy to return to Tensas Parish. The momentum from this effort kept him going for several weeks, but the inevitable letdown came hard and fast. Sometime in July, Henry fell seriously ill. He minimized his problems in a letter to his brother on August 6, 1865, but later correspondence suggested that his recovery dragged on for several months.[2]

This Country is Ruined

The ambient pessimism among Henry's friends did nothing to mount his morale; as the planter's daughter Anna Marie Farrar saw it:

> This is really a dreary place; perhaps it appears so because everything is out of order. The negroes seem almost too indolent to

> exist, and only show they have any interest in life by holding meetings and shouting and praying.[3]

Or, as Henry wrote in a letter to his parents:

> What I shall do I don't know. …this country is ruined—dead—and will continue so till some labor system is fixed. I wish some of your anti-slavery people could see the condition of the negroes in this country now and compare it with what it was before the war. Talk about the "sin of slavery!" If ever there was a sin it was in putting the negroes in their present condition. Who is responsible?[4]

Indeed, who was responsible? For Henry and his friends, it was obviously the Republicans with their Emancipation Proclamation and now the Thirteenth Amendment, which was to be ratified on December 6, 1865. Former Union general Carl Schurz, whom President Johnson sent to the South on a fact-finding mission, wrote that many "honest and well-meaning people admitted to me with a sort of helpless stupefaction that their imagination was wholly incapable of grasping the fact that their former slaves were now free." Until the end of the war, the army had imposed a system of compulsory annual labor contracts in occupied areas. These contracts gave the Freedmen some protection against exploitation by the planters since wages were fixed by decree at the beginning of the season. The Blacks, however, generally considered this system little better than slavery, especially when they continued to work under the white man's supervision, raising mainly "colonial" crops such as cotton and sugar. To the former slave, the idea of freedom had always included a plot of land where he could grow food to feed his family, and this was generally lacking under the annual contract system. This is no doubt why Mrs. Farrar found the negroes so "indolent." In his final report to President Johnson, Schurz stated:

> That the result of the free labor experiment made under circumstances so extremely unfavorable should at once be a perfect success, no reasonable person would expect. Nevertheless, a large majority of the southern men with whom I came into contact announced their opinions with so positive an assurance as to produce the impression that their minds were fully made up. In at

> least 19 cases of 20 the reply I received to my inquiry about their views on the new system was uniformly this: "You cannot make the negro work, without physical compulsion."[5]

Tensas Parish planters preferred not to look across the Mississippi to Davis Bend, where the former slaves of Joseph and Jefferson Davis were running their former masters' properties on their own and doing quite well. During the 1865 season, the Davis Bend freedmen raised 2000 bales of cotton and made a profit of $160,000. This success was partially due to the pre-war policies of the Davis brothers, Joseph and Jefferson, who had treated their slaves exceptionally well, encouraging their initiative and even allowing some management responsibility to the more apt among them. Davis Bend and similar experiments showed that confiscation and distribution of land to the freedmen, as advocated by a few radical Republicans, might have "fixed" the labor system if the freedmen received sufficient guidance. In 1865, massive land distribution seemed politically possible; the first Freedmen's Bureau Bill gave the Bureau control over 850,000 acres of abandoned and confiscated lands in the former Confederacy and allowed the distribution of 40-acre plots of such land to freedmen. As more conservative administrators took control of the Freedmesn's Bureau, this option was never exercised. Radical Congressman Thaddeus Stevens proposed that land belonging to the wealthiest Southerners be confiscated and distributed to freedmen. That idea, however, was not entertained by more than a few of his colleagues and even aroused alarmed opposition from conservative Republicans.[6]

Thus, the North, as well as the South, rejected the Radical solution of land confiscation and distribution, and the sanctity of private property was maintained. In 1866, President Andrew Johnson pardoned many pre-war plantation owners and ordered their lands restored to them—even lands that had already been granted or leased to freedmen. Afterward, considerably less desirable land remained available for distribution. For example, Joseph Davis was pardoned and recovered Davis Bend, but he sold it on a long-term mortgage to the Blacks who were working the land. The buyers seemed to have the experience necessary to manage the property, but successive floods and crop failures ended their project in the 1870s. Faced with such setbacks, the Freedmen had little choice but to support the system of annual labor contracts. Consequently, Louisiana entered the Reconstruction era with a labor system that satisfied neither the freedmen nor the planters. Since the

Freedmen's Bureau no longer tried to fix salaries, each party tried to bend the system to its advantage—the planters toward a regime as close as possible to slavery and the Negroes toward independence in practice as well as in theory.[7]

Time Out for Romance

While the planters and freedmen of Tensas Parish were struggling with the problems of free labor, Henry was fighting to regain his health. Family tradition has it that he recovered under the care of the Farrar family of St. Joseph. He probably knew Thomas Prince Farrar before the war; Farrar was the leading lawyer of Tensas Parish, and the paths of surveyors and lawyers were bound to cross professionally, if not socially. After the war, there was a stronger bond of shared sacrifice; in 1861, Henry left St. Joseph in the same company as Farrar's nephew and namesake, Lieutenant Thomas Prince Farrar II, who died from wounds received in the Battle of Port Republic.[8]

The Farrar mini-mansion, located near the Courthouse on the southern side of town, already housed the Farrars and six of their children, including two young ladies of marriageable age: Jane Kempe Farrar (Jennie) and her younger sister, Anna Howard Farrar (Nannie). Southern hospitality rendered the house infinitely expandable, and the Farrars frequently received friends and family members for extended visits. The house has since been demolished, and the site is known as Farrar Park.

On September 12, 1865, the Farrar home was the setting for the wedding of Jennie Farrar and Augustus Elijah Bass, with Henry B. Richardson as a witness. Other witnesses were Joshua Winchester, a prominent pro-Union lawyer and planter residing in Natchez, Mississippi, and James A. Seddon, an important plantation owner and neighbor of the groom. Five years earlier, when cotton was king, this would have been a brilliant marriage for Jennie. In the 1860 census, the value of the groom's real property was estimated at $100,000 and his personal property (mostly slaves) at $185,000. Gus Bass was the sole owner of the Myrtle Grove Plantation in nearby Waterproof, and the region's planters usually considered marital alliances only with other land-owning families. In this reconstructed world, however, Gus was in a difficult financial situation. He had borrowed heavily before the war to expand his plantation's production, but now that his principal assets—

169 slaves according to the 1860 census—had been emancipated, he would soon find it difficult to meet scheduled payments. In the post-war setting, an alliance with a good lawyer might prove more useful than one with another illiquid planter.[9]

In that society, where marriage was one of the few acceptable feminine careers, Jennie's wedding must have made Nannie more than ready to take the same step if a suitable candidate presented himself. And who could be more suitable, romantically if not financially, than a returning war hero? Nannie's parents seemed to encourage such a romance, as suggested by the warm closing of her mother's letter to Henry in Lake Providence, where he had been appointed Levee Engineer:

> I hope you may soon be able to transfer your business to the Parish of Tensas, and realize some of those bright anticipations of future usefulness, success and happiness, in which your friends have so sanguinely indulged. Mr. Farrar and myself will always be happy to assist you in any way that we can. Believe me sincerely and affectionately your friend,
>
> A.M. Farrar.[10]

That was all the encouragement that Henry needed; a few weeks later, he had arranged his transfer and was back in Tensas Parish, spending his Christmas holiday with the Farrars at Gus Bass's Myrtle Grove Plantation. On December 26, he wrote to his mother announcing his engagement:

> Myrtle Grove, where I now write, is some fifteen miles below Saint Joseph, and I have been here for two days, passing the happiest Christmas of my whole life. And I want to tell you what makes me so happy. It is because I am with Miss Nannie Farrar, whom I love more than anybody in the whole world, and who, I hope, loves me. Sometime, I hope you will see her, and I know you will love her too. She is just as good and sweet and gentle as you are yourself, my dear mother, and I suppose for that reason, and because I feel that you and she are the only persons who care much for me, I am constantly reminded of you when I am with her. She is sitting right over opposite me now, knitting and looking so sweet I can hardly keep my eyes on the paper enough to write….

After the death of the Confederacy, it seemed to me almost as if there was nothing left to live for, and as if I never could be happy again, but for the past three months I have been a new man—happier, and I hope better than I ever was before. Indeed it seems to me almost as if I had never lived at all before, and as for the Confederacy, though my views and feelings as to the right and justice of the matter are unchanged, I can smile to think how small and insignificant a matter it was to set my heart on, when there is still such a treasure as Miss Nannie. And then I compare myself to the man who found "the pearl of great pries"….[11]

Though very much in love, Henry was not about to rush into marriage, as shown by his next letter:

Saint Joseph, 5th March 1865 (sic)

… It would seem that my letter to Mother from Myrtle Grove has created a considerable sensation, which wasn't at all my intention, though I am pleased to know that you all take so much interest in my happiness. The matter therein presented is indeed the greatest and best thing that ever occupied my intention, and I am still going on, getting more and more in love; but not a bit nearer leading my "fair friend to the Hymeneal altar," as Father calls it. These things are not to be done without supplies of bread and butter on hand, or at least in sight; and thus far "I can't see it." Should such an happy event ever transpire (as I devoutly hope it may, sometime) it will be years and years hence; for "art is long", and I am neither enterprising or lucky, in pecuniary affairs. Mother asks if Miss Nannie is a relative of the Mrs. Farrar who was so kind to me during my illness last summer. She is her daughter. Father says he hopes she is a christian (sic). She is better than that. But if I told you all about her, I suppose the world itself would not contain the books of good things I could truly say about her. There is nobody like her.

It is rather a discouraging thing to have arrived at my age, and to find myself turning grey, getting toothless and wrinkled, and not to have done anything or made anything in the world. However, it don't matter much, and my chief regret is that I have never been able to aid you in any way, and don't know when I ever shall be. I am as happy as a man has any right to be in this

world, and only desire for myself a home, a wife and five or ten million dollars, and for you everything that could add to your comfort or happiness—not much, is it?

I would write you my views on the state of the country, if I had any. But I am such a good and loyal citizen that I don't know or care whether the Monroe Doctrine is enforced or not, or whether A. Johnson is drunk or sober, or whether I have to be taxed to pay fifty millions of dollars for the Freedmen's Bureau or the same amount for some other foolish project of Mr Sumner's or Mr Stevens.'

It's all one to me….

We haven't any Post office here as yet, and I see little prospect that we ever will have. There is no man in the country who can take the oath of office prescribed. We are dependent upon the kindness of the steamboat officers and the caprice of the Postmasters of New Orleans and Vicksburg for mails.[12]

Henry's brief reference to national politics was hyperbolic, to say the least. When the Freedmen's Bureau was established in 1865, the original Act of Congress had provided no independent budget for the new agency and had limited its life to one year. During its first year, the Bureau had drawn on the War Department for funds and personnel to carry out its mission of distributing food, clothing, and fuel to the destitute and overseeing "all subjects" relating to the Freedmen's condition. This was far less than what radicals such as Senator Charles Sumner and Representative Thaddeus Stevens had proposed.[13]

Indeed, the South seemed to be returning toward the old social and economic order. President Johnson had begun to fashion Reconstruction in such a way that the southern States would be entirely free to manage the transition from slavery according to the wishes of the white ruling classes. In Louisiana, Johnson had recognized the State government, and Governor Madison Wells had won reelection after declaring that government would be carried on "for the exclusive benefit of the white race."[14]

The planter class may have been encouraged by Johnson's policy, but the future was still not looking bright enough for Henry and Nannie to set a wedding date. Henry's own situation and the local economy were still so uncertain that he preferred to wait. As he explained to his parents in the same letter of March 5:

> I am kept very busy by the duties of my position as Levee Eng. and don't get any pay as yet, but live in hope and on what I can borrow. If I ever get time, I hope to get some private surveying to do which I flatter myself will pay better.[15]

Levee construction was not a profitable activity in 1866 or 1867. If the levees did not hold, the planters could no longer afford to pay Henry because their crops had been damaged. If the levees held, the planters became complacent and saw no reason to continue levee construction. Before the war, slave labor built and maintained the levees. During the war, maintenance was neglected, and Union armies destroyed miles of levees. After the war, levee building lagged; Black workers wanted pay for work on the levees, whereas planters believed they should work voluntarily for the good of the community. In any case, many planters no longer had the cash, credit, or surplus food to pay for levee work. Somehow, local levee boards managed to get work done, but it was never enough. Despite Henry's best professional efforts, there were some breaks in the levees in the spring of 1866. He wrote to his parents from St. Joseph on May 16 that the country was in a difficult situation after flooding. The spring of 1867 brought record-high waters and disastrous flooding, with levees broken in all directions. On April 20, 1867, Henry wrote, "… the only hope of relief was through one or two good years for a cotton crop; but now, the situation of nine-tenths of the people looks almost utterly desperate."[16]

From Henry's point of view, the political situation was also worsening. Under President Johnson's lenient Reconstruction policy, proponents of white supremacy had regained power in Louisiana and other State governments throughout the South. In 1866, however, they began to overplay their hand. As promised by Governor "Mad" Wells, Louisiana had done little to protect the rights of the freedmen. On the contrary, Louisiana joined with other southern states in enacting a series of laws commonly called the Black Codes, which were designed to tighten white control over the Black labor force. A section of the Louisiana Code required that all agricultural workers sign contracts during the first 10 days of January for the entire year. Another section provided that vagrant freedmen might be arrested and hired out to the highest bidder for the remainder of the year.[17]

In 1866, Louisiana's radical Republicans proposed a controversial plan to reconvene the State Constitutional Convention of 1864 and

amend the State Constitution. To curb the growing strength of white supremacists, they proposed to enfranchise Blacks and disenfranchise supporters of the Confederacy. Governor Wells, making a complete pirouette from his previous white supremacy stance, supported the move, and the meeting was convened for July 30, 1866. When a small group of delegates assembled, they were supported by a procession of some 200 Blacks, mostly former Union soldiers. A white mob, joined by the white New Orleans police, viciously attacked the procession and the constitutional assembly. By the time federal troops arrived, 37 persons had been killed and more than 100 injured.[18]

This New Orleans massacre, plus the northern reaction to the ultra-conservative legislation that the southern states adopted under Presidential Reconstruction, led to a large Republican victory in the Congressional elections of 1866. The reinforcement of the Republicans enabled Congress to legislate an increasingly radical program beginning with the Reconstruction Act of March 2, 1867. This Act, which applied only to the rebel South, temporarily reimposed military reconstruction, mandated negro manhood suffrage, temporarily disenfranchised most Confederate officeholders, and set the stage for the replacement of existing State governments.[19]

With the political situation looking worse for ex-Confederates and economic conditions still unfavorable, Henry began to wonder if Louisiana would ever offer an opportunity to forge a career or found a family; he and Nannie had apparently been hoping to schedule a June wedding, but now he was once again unemployed. Since conditions were so unfavorable in Louisiana, perhaps it would be worthwhile to move to another State or even to another country. In the weeks after his release from Johnson's Island, Henry's acrimony toward the Federal government was so strong that he felt he would never wish to live under United States rule again. He was not the only demobilized Confederate officer to feel that way, and the dismal economic and political conditions in the post-war South kept those feelings alive. But where might those unreconciled rebels go? Brazil offered considerable promise, and some Confederate refugees did manage to establish themselves there, despite the great distance and other obstacles to settlement. Mexico had once been considered a land of opportunity for southern expansion, but in 1866, the country was still in revolutionary turmoil following the destitution of Emperor Maximilian.[20]

Some emigrants turned toward British Honduras (now Belize), a

colony that offered the advantage of stable British rule and a familiar linguistic and cultural background. The colony was already well known to traders along the Gulf coast thanks to its principal port, Belize City, which had been a busy entrepôt serving blockade runners and smugglers during the early years of the war. In any case, the attractions of British Honduras were sufficient to arouse Henry's interest and that of several other former Confederate officers from Tensas Parish. Correspondence from Henry's father indicates that Henry made an exploratory trip there, probably in May 1867. At that time, several southern families were attempting to establish plantations in the colony, but prospects for their success were still too uncertain to induce Henry to follow their lead. Still, Henry had not entirely abandoned the possibility of moving to British Honduras.[21]

Back home in St. Joseph with no apparent prospect for employment nearby, Henry suddenly cast aside all his prudent reserves and agreed to set a marriage date. How to explain this sudden about-face? The heart has its reasons, but Henry made no effort to explain them, at least in his archived letters. Thanks to parish records, we know that their wedding took place at the Farrar home in St. Joseph on June 18, 1867. As shown by the next entry in the marriage register, it was a double wedding ceremony: Nannie's cousin Annie Alderson married Dr. George Weems at the same time and place. From these vital records, it is tempting to speculate that once the Alderson-Weems date was known, Nannie convinced Henry and her parents that it would be downright impolite to reject the idea of a double wedding with her cousin.[22]

More likely, it was Henry who took the initiative. Shortly after the wedding, the newlyweds left for a lengthy stay in New England. Whether or not Henry had any definite prospects for employment, he knew that the economy was beginning to boom in the North and would certainly offer more opportunities than in suffering Louisiana. A trip to the North might allow him to break out of his half-yearly unemployment cycle. In any case, working in the North would mean a long absence from St. Joseph, and he did not want to leave Nannie behind.

So Henry went North and presented his new bride to his family. This one joyous event would wipe away the traces of sorrow and anxiety that Henry's parents had suffered during the four long years of war. They had long ago forgiven him, but still, there was some work of reconciliation to do, and this fresh start would make it easier. For Henry, this would also be a small step toward rejoining the Union without sacri-

ficing his pride as an unreconstructed rebel. Except for his brother John, who had visited him at the Davids Island Prison hospital, he had not seen his family for nearly seven years. His parents had returned to Gilead, Maine, in 1861 and were now living with their youngest child, Mary Elizabeth, who had married William Reade Peabody, a farmer and scion of the first family to settle in the town. Somewhat more delicate may have been Henry's reconciliation with William, his former schoolmate, who had served as a First Lieutenant in the 28th Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment.[23]

But Henry had to get on with his other important project—finding a job. The most likely place for him to find work was Boston, where he could hope to renew his pre-war contacts and where he and Nannie might limit expenses by sharing lodgings with his brother. Henry probably found temporary employment in Boston, but their stay there was not entirely happy. Nannie had health problems, unaccustomed as she was to the rigors of a Boston winter. One also wonders how Henry's northern employers and associates treated him so soon after the end of a bitter war. Notwithstanding his professional competence, how much confidence could they place in a Yankee who had fought for the Confederacy? Obviously, he would not benefit from the same level of respect that he enjoyed in Louisiana.

By December 1867, the oncoming New England winter had shut down whatever construction projects Henry had been working on, and he wrote to his parents, "I am hoping every day to get letters from Louisiana that will warrant me in returning…. [T]he revenues are not increasing, and the coffers are waxing low and lean." For several months, Nannie had been receiving letters from her family asking when they were coming home. As early as September, her mother had asked: "Has Mr. Richardson decided yet to remain at the North or to return here this fall? Capt. Porter is the State engineer, and of course, Mr. Richardson could get any employment from him he wished."[24]

Passive Resistance

With "the coffers waxing low" in Boston and prospects improving in the South, Henry and Nannie decided to spend the winter in Tensas Parish, with a tentative plan to return North in the spring. They set off by sea after New Year's Day and reached St. Joseph on January 27, 1868. On their return, Henry found that employment prospects were not nearly as

bright as his mother-in-law had suggested. Louisiana was still under military Reconstruction. General Winfield Scott Hancock, commanding the Mississippi-Louisiana District, appointed a new Governor, Joshua Baker, for Louisiana about the same time Henry and Nannie returned. Governor Baker soon reported to Hancock that Louisiana was bankrupt. Hancock then ordered strict controls over State expenses, which precluded any new expenditures for public works in the immediate future.[25]

In any case, Henry's father-in-law had a plan for Henry, which sent the young couple off in an entirely new direction, as Nannie explained to Henry's parents:

> They all say "times" are dreadful here, but everybody I have seen looks happy and well. Henry and I are going down to Myrtle Grove soon to take up our abode; Grandma is going to live with us; and I think we will get on finely; I have immense projects about my garden and orchard, dairy and poultry yard.[26]

Gus and Jennie had moved out of their Myrtle Grove home, and Henry and Nannie took their place. What could have prompted this surprising change? Although Henry had been raised in agricultural communities, he had never shown the slightest interest in a career as a farmer or even as a planter. There were other interests in play. At some time in 1867 or January 1868, Gus Bass, Henry's brother-in-law, transferred title to Myrtle Grove Plantation to their father-in-law, Thomas Prince Farrar. Although no documentary confirmation of this transaction has been found, the text and citations that follow provide solid evidence that Farrar owned Myrtle Grove during the cotton-growing season of 1868. This transfer of ownership is surprising, to say the least, considering that the property had been in Gus's family for three generations. Family correspondence contains no clue as to why this transfer of ownership took place. Looking back to the war years, however, one can see that Gus had been having huge problems trying to run Myrtle Grove, which suggests that Henry and his father-in-law took over the plantation in 1868 in order to help Gus survive a financial crisis.

The outbreak of the war found Gus Bass heavily in debt. His mother, Elizabeth Foreman, died about 1858, leaving him the sole owner of Myrtle Grove Plantation. The antebellum cotton boom prompted him to expand production by purchasing additional slaves and perhaps addi-

tional land. Additionally, he had assumed the debts of his brother, Job, who died in 1857. As a result, the proceeds of the pre-war cotton crops were not sufficient to cover his obligations, and he had to refinance the remaining debt by signing notes to his cotton factors, Rotchford, Brown & Co. His factors had either placed the notes with other clients who had surplus funds to invest or had discounted them with the Citizens Bank of New Orleans.[27]

During the first two years of the war, Gus was exempt from military service because he was the only member of his family available to manage his plantation. Soon, however, the situation of Confederate forces along the Mississippi became more difficult as Union armies closed in from the north and the south, and Gus's draft exemption was canceled. He was able to obtain a discharge from the army, however, by hiring a substitute to take his place, which he managed to do in January 1863.[28]

It seems unlikely that Gus Bass could market or even grow a cotton crop in 1863, with General Grant's forces marching and counter-marching through Tensas Parish. One of his slaves, named Alfred Fairfax, took advantage of the confused situation and persuaded a band of fellow slaves to flee the Parish. Fairfax led his band of freedom-seekers directly to the Union Army, whose officers were happy to recruit these able-bodied workers for their Pioneer Corps (pick-and-shovel men) and to put them to work preparing for the siege of Port Gibson across the Mississippi. Since the Fairfax band had also run off with the plantation's mules, it is unlikely that Gus was left with the resources necessary to produce much of a crop in 1863.[29]

By the end of the season, however, cotton buyers were operating out of various Union garrisons along the Mississippi. In 1864, the situation was still uncertain. Most of Gus's neighbors had fled westward to Confederate territory around Shreveport or in Texas. All slaves in Confederate territory had theoretically been emancipated on January 1, 1863. Some had to flee with their former masters, and many others took refuge across the river in Mississippi, where Union forces had set up refugee camps. Rather than let the abandoned plantations lie idle, Union authorities leased them to carpetbaggers, who hired freedmen to raise cotton crops. This could be quite profitable but hazardous because Confederate forces were still making frequent raids. At the beginning of the season, Union forces attempted to secure the area with scattered garrisons. In February 1864, Black troops supported by Union gunboats

repulsed several Confederate raids at Waterproof, which is right next to Myrtle Grove.[30]

Despite the risks involved, Gus had little choice but to raise a crop if he was to keep up with the payments due on his debts. On February 3, 1864, he signed an agreement with a certain Clark Wright of Warren County, Mississippi, under which Gus agreed to manage his plantation in accordance with Federal government requirements, to raise a cotton crop thereon, and to deliver one-fourth of the crop to Wright. In return, Wright would supply a team of Black workers and all necessary supplies.[31]

Unfortunately, Gus was never able to market the cotton. Pursuant to orders from Colonel L.V. Reeves, Confederate raiders burned his cotton, 900 bales of it, according to a receipt for Gus's claim, which he submitted to the Confederate Commissioner of Claims in Shreveport on October 10, 1864. Gus and Colonel Reeves knew each other fairly well since Reeves had been a lawyer and planter in Waterproof before the war and was known as the "Hon. L.V. Reeves" in the 1860 census. Colonel Reeves, having been a planter himself, understood the financial pressure that led Gus to raise a cash crop for Union-controlled markets. Still, his duty as a Confederate soldier took precedence over whatever sentiment he felt for Gus.[32]

The end of the war allowed Tensas planters to grow cotton under less risky conditions, but it also gave their creditors the opportunity to collect their debts. In Gus's case, the notes he had signed before the war were now past due and still accumulating interest. By the spring of 1866, the holders of his notes were threatening court action. Gus realized that the only way to gain time to pay his debts was to offer the note holders collateral. At first, he offered mortgages on several smaller properties but finally agreed on May 3, 1866, to sign a mortgage on Myrtle Grove itself to secure a new series of notes totaling $56,000 and payable over four years at 8% per annum.[33]

Gus Bass did well in 1866. He was able to meet the $14,000 mortgage installment due in May 1867 and thus reduce his debt by a net amount of about $13,000 at the end of that year. With the help of the Freedmen's Bureau, Gus hired 74 workers—men, women, and adolescents. He based his work contract on a model furnished by the Freedmen's Bureau, which provided for year-long employment with half the monthly salary withheld and paid at the end of the year. However, Gus added two clauses which specified that he had the right to dismiss unsatisfactory

workers and retain the unpaid half of their salaries, and secondly, if the workers did not respect the plantation's rules, which were to be read aloud to the workers every month, he had the right to impose fines that would be deducted from the half of their salaries paid at the end of the year. Gus's contract was essentially the same as those most other cotton planters signed with their workers in 1866.[34]

In the spring of 1867, Tensas and neighboring parishes suffered extremely heavy flooding. Although Myrtle Grove is situated on relatively high ground, damaged fields may not have drained rapidly enough to permit replanting. Along with the floods came increasing insect infestation. Cotton planters also faced labor problems. Some planters had enforced fines so strictly that workers might lose a quarter of their pay due to tardiness, absence, or failure to work correctly. The planters were still trying to enforce the only labor system they had known, the gang labor system of slavery. This, however, was not the worker's idea of free labor; it seemed to him much the same as slavery, except that a system of fines had replaced the overseer's lash. From the beginning of the 1867 season, many of the freedmen refused to sign contracts, held out for a share in the profits, or posed other conditions that the planters considered unacceptable. Whenever contract disputes arose in these early post-war years, the workers could turn to the nearest Freedmen's Bureau for conciliation or arbitration. The Bureaus usually ruled in favor of the planters, but their very presence helped strengthen the freedmen's bargaining positions. Although the closest Bureaus were 15 miles to the north in St. Joseph, or 25 miles to the south in Vidalia, such distances would not have been an obstacle to workers at Myrtle Grove if they thought they were not getting a fair deal.[35]

Whatever Gus Bass's problems were in 1867, he was in a perilous situation at the end of that year. By then, he knew that he would not be able to meet his next $14,000 mortgage installment due in May 1868. In fact, he began to wonder if he would even be able to obtain the credit necessary to finance the 1868 cotton season. Up to then, creditors had been relatively patient with their past-due borrowers. In Gus Bass's case, patience paid off for his brokers and principal creditors, Rotchford, Brown & Co. They had obtained a mortgage to secure their credit and a substantial reduction of the outstanding balance. By the end of 1867, however, the patience of other creditors had begun to wear thin, and debtors who had not been able to make scheduled payments found themselves in danger of losing their land. The law firm of Farrar and

Reeves had seen a massive increase in its caseload. As Edgar Howard "Ned" Farrar wrote to his sister, Nannie, on November 21, 1867: "If Uncle Edgar gets lazy this fall and next spring, and adjourns Court without trying any cases, the lawyers will all starve. Just think, Pa and Mr. Reeves have between four and five hundred cases on the docket." "Uncle Edgar" was Edgar Douglas Farrar, District Judge from 1852 to 1868, and Thomas Prince Farrar's brother.[36]

Without reviewing the court records, one can safely assume that many of these pending court cases involved planters' past-due debts, which might eventually lead to foreclosure. Even the wealthiest families were not immune; it was probably about this time that creditors brought suit against Mrs. Ann Elizabeth Routh, leading to a sheriff's sale of the Palmetto and Routhwood Plantations, which she had inherited from her husband, Stephen M. Routh. News of the Routh family difficulties brought consternation to Tensas Parish planters since this branch of the Rouths had been among the wealthiest families in the Parish, with real property valued at $472,000 in the 1860 census. Members of the Routh family repurchased part of these properties from the Citizens Bank of Louisiana in 1869.[37]

More spectacular was the dissolution of the vast empire assembled by Dr. Haller Nutt. He died in 1864, and his widow had to surrender most of the estate's 43,000 acres to settle the estate's debts. In one 1868 foreclosure, the Citizens' Bank sold the Nutt family's Evergreen Place, along with 443 shares of stock in the Citizens' Bank, for $17,500. The 1860 census showed that this plantation was worked by more than 100 slaves, suggesting a pre-war value of at least $100,000. Obviously, creditors were becoming much more aggressive, even though the properties they might seize could scarcely be expected to cover their loans at distressed sale prices.[38]

Faced with the possibility of losing Myrtle Grove Plantation, Gus Bass turned to his father-in-law for legal advice, and eventually for financial assistance. Thomas Prince Farrar had good reason to pay more than professional attention to this client, who had married his daughter in September 1865. Since Gus was in default on his payments and apparently had no liquid assets, there was no way he could prevent eventual foreclosure if the mortgage holder had determined to take that action. Still, he could put up legal roadblocks and perhaps delay foreclosure. This delaying action might stand all the more chance of success because his father-in-law's brother, Judge Edgar Douglas Farrar, would likely be

Thomas Prince Farrar, about 1860

the presiding judge in any court case, and because of the heavily charged docket of court cases awaiting hearing in Tensas Parish.

In any case, Gus Bass agreed to transfer the title to Myrtle Grove to Thomas Prince Farrar, who believed this transfer would gain enough time to harvest a decent cotton crop and bring the mortgage payments up to date. To provide evidence that the title transfer was not fictitious, Gus and Jennie Bass left Myrtle Grove to live in St. Joseph, while Henry and Nannie took their place at the plantation for the duration of the cotton season. Henry thus became his father-in-law's manager, and although he had little experience in cotton culture, his service as an army staff officer had armed him with the gravitas and negotiating skills necessary to supervise the freedmen who would cultivate and harvest Myrtle Grove's 1868 cotton crop. Meanwhile, Gus apparently remained active in the management of Myrtle Grove and its cotton crop, albeit from a distance. It also appears that a fourth party was associated with the Bass–Farrar–Richardson trio; an enterprising young merchant named Charles C. Cordill worked with Gus Bass in the exploitation of the 1868 crop, according to Cordill's obituary. Cordill's exact role is not known, but since he was then a merchant trader, he probably provided financing and marketing services.[39]

Gus Bass never intended this transfer of title to be permanent. This is evident because Jennie Bass left personal household effects, such as dishes and glassware, in the cupboards at their Myrtle Grove Plantation home. In fact, as soon as the cotton crop was gathered, Farrar transferred title back to the Bass family, but this time in the form of a donation to Jennie Bass. Farrar retained ownership of the 1868 cotton crop, but agreed to apply three-eighths of the proceeds toward reduction of the debt on the property. This second transfer could give Gus and Jennie another year of immunity from foreclosure. Since Jennie was debt-free, her separate property could not be seized without lengthy court procedures that would give Gus time to raise another cotton crop and reduce his debt even further. In October 1869, Jennie apparently ceded Myrtle Grove back to Gus, in exchange for a mortgage on the property, which she renounced in 1902.[40]

This series of transactions may look like a legal shell game invented by a less-than-scrupulous lawyer, but Farrar's reputable colleagues throughout the State were adopting similar tactics as their desperate clients struggled to save their plantations from equally desperate creditors. In this case, Thomas Farrar was also putting his own credit and reputation on the line to save his son-in-law. In taking title to Myrtle Grove, he also assumed liability for the encumbrances on the property, a liability that was not extinguished when he passed title to Jennie. In any case, the maneuver appears to have been successful, and Gus and Jennie held on to Myrtle Grove until she died in 1918.[41]

In this episode, Henry, too, showed a strong sense of family solidarity, a virtue that must have come naturally to him, considering the example of his Thurston and Richardson forebears. In January 1868, this proposed year of cotton planting had seemed a rather uncertain proposition and one that would prevent him from advancing his engineering career during that year. As the year ended, however, he probably wound up with a tidy sum as his share of the cotton crop, plus a year of cotton planting experience that would serve him well in his later relations with a renascent planter class.

In any case, Henry set to work at Myrtle Grove soon after his return from Boston. On February 7, one of his first official acts was to make a copy of the 1868 Myrtle Grove labor contract, which he sent to the Freedmen's Bureau. The contract showed that Thomas Prince Farrar had hired an overseer so that Henry would not have to exercise close supervision over the 38 workers and ten children who were hired.[42]

In some respects, their year at Myrtle Grove turned out to be a pleasant bucolic interlude for the Richardsons. While Henry was learning the planter's trade, his young wife took her farming chores very seriously, as shown by letters from her mother in St. Joseph:

> I must compliment you on your butter. It is exceedingly nice, quite as good as Mrs. Briscoe's. We give 50 cents a pound for butter and I could have sold yours for 50 cents, but Mrs. Briscoe sent butter in yesterday and everybody has a supply. There was six pounds, and I have no money. I sent you a very fine ham and some garden seed. Send your butter up on Monday or Tuesday and what I do not want I will sell.[43]

Shortly thereafter, she wrote that she had sent Nannie $3.00 as proceeds of butter sales.[44]

Henry and Nannie may not have known much about cotton, but they probably had expert advice from "Grandma" Jane Kempe. Henry already knew "Grandma" fairly well. She owned Plassy Plantation on the Tensas River, which had been worked by 80 slaves before the war. The previous year, having reached the age of 65, she had decided to retire from active management of the plantation and move in with the Farrars in St. Joseph. Henry and Gus Bass were charged with settling her affairs at Plassy and disposing of her livestock. Henry had dutifully written her a complete report on the affair.[45]

Jane Kempe's duties as cotton consultant did not occupy her full time, however, and we find her again in St. Joseph for the visit of her niece, Varina Davis, and her husband, Jefferson, who had been freed on bail while awaiting trial on charges of treason. Nannie's mother described the visit in a letter to Nannie:

> I went down to the boat with your grandmother and cousin Varina. We did not get out of the carriage as the boat had been waiting for some time for them, but Mr. Davis came to the carriage to see us. So many emotions seemed to gather in my heart the moment I saw him, but in spite of all my efforts tears came into my eyes. He looked well, but of course has changed a great deal in the last twenty years. None of the ladies of St. Joseph went to the boat to see Mr. Davis. It was a wet day and the boat landed a mile off, but the citizens of Rodney [across the River in Mississippi], ladies and gentlemen, all went out to see him.[46]

Jefferson Davis and his wife, accompanied by her aunt, Jane Kempe, also received a warm welcome on February 26, 1868, in Natchez, where the population filled the streets in their honor. Charges against Jefferson Davis were later dropped after President Johnson signed a general pardon on Christmas Day, 1868.[47]

Guerrilla Warfare

Although 1868 was a fairly successful year for Louisiana's cotton planters, it was far from tranquil politically. The Reconstruction Act of 1867 empowered the army to intervene to protect life and liberty. The

former Confederate states could seat their representation in Congress only if they ratified the 14th Amendment and adopted new constitutions providing for universal manhood suffrage. Accordingly, a new State Constitutional Convention opened in the autumn of 1867 and produced what was probably the most democratically advanced State constitution in the South during the entire 19th century. The new constitution was adopted in the spring of 1868, and Louisiana was readmitted to the Union in June. The Reconstruction Act had given the Freedmen undreamed of political power. Black delegates had been in the majority at the Constitutional Convention, and Black voters assured a majority for Republican carpetbagger Henry Clay Warmoth, who was elected Governor in the Spring of 1868. Many of the Freedmen began to take their new civic responsibilities quite seriously, attending meetings sponsored by organizations such as the Union League in order to inform themselves about the candidates and issues.[48]

In the face of these developments, the white community initially seemed immobilized by shock and awe. But soon, the growth in Black political activity led many whites to fear that Blacks were organizing a conspiracy against their lives and property. Following the Republican sweep in the State elections, groups of white Democrats were organized throughout the State. They resolved to use whatever means might be necessary to prevent another Republican victory, which they saw as the equivalent of Black rule. In Louisiana, these groups were usually linked to the Knights of the White Camelia, which used tactics similar to those of the Ku Klux Klan in other southern States. The efforts of the Knights were so energetic that by October of 1868, former Governor Hahn complained that "…murder and intimidation are the order of the day in this State." White gangs were roaming the streets of New Orleans, breaking up Republican political meetings. In the countryside, violence and intimidation were generally directed against potential Black voters, although white Republicans and white employees of the Freedmen's Bureau were also menaced. In Landry Parish, a mob destroyed a local Republican newspaper and then invaded the plantations, killing as many as 200 Blacks. Since there was no provision for secret ballots, Black voters were often forced to vote Democrat or punished by severe beatings if they did not. The result was that Louisiana was one of only two States where Democrats prevailed in 1868. Due largely to the Knights' efforts, Electors pledged to the Democrat candidate, Horatio Seymour, outpolled Republicans

by 80,225 votes to 33,263, even though Black voters outnumbered white voters in the State.[49]

In a letter Henry wrote to his parents shortly after the election, he seemed to be saying that there had been violence in Tensas Parish, but it is difficult to distinguish between fact and irony in this paragraph:

> The political situation is full of hopeful promise. The colored man and brother made a little lower than the angels, is daily slaughtered like sheep (see report of La. legislative committee) in this Parish. Union men and women are still robbed, murdered and ravished in the broad light of day and the rebellion still rages. Loyal officers and even chaplains are still unable to gather spoons that have been used to stir up sedition without incurring contumacy, insult and even violence. Harper's Weekly and the N.Y. Tribune are still held inferior to the Bible (so-called) as a rule and guide of faith and action. Nevertheless, the situation is hopeful for—are not the loyal masses enfranchised?[50]

Henry may have intended his comments to be ironic, because there was little or no election violence in Tensas Parish during the election or the pre-election period, according to Parish Judge H.R. Steele's report dated December 15, 1868, to the legislature's Committee on Conditions of Peace and Order:

> Inclosed find the Coroner's report of a murder committed in this parish shortly before the late election. With the exception of this unfortunate affair, I am happy to say that good order has prevailed in this parish, and the citizens, black and white, voted as their own wishes dictated, which accounts for the large majorities we gave for Grant.[51]

When Henry wrote his letter of November 30, 1868, the final Report of the Louisiana legislature had not yet appeared, and Henry apparently preferred not to lend credence to the Republican majority's preliminary report of widespread violence and intimidation elsewhere in Louisiana. The legislature's final report, however, confirmed and amplified their preliminary findings and named The Knights of the White Camelia as responsible for much of the violence. The legislature then asked the United States House of Representatives to conduct a further investiga-

tion of the election irregularities, to which the House responded by sending a three-man committee that interviewed hundreds of witnesses over a six-month period. The Committee issued a detailed Report on the membership and methods of the Knights that corroborated the reports of the legislature.[52]

Although the Democrats won 32 of Louisiana's 48 parishes, 16 parishes—including Tensas—gave majorities to Grant, and these were all located along the State's major rivers: the Mississippi, the Atchafalaya, and the lower Red River. These riverside parishes were the most fertile and productive parishes of the State, and all had numerous Black workers who usually voted Republican. Although most of the large plantation owners in these parishes were Democrats, many were not receptive to the Knights and their tactics because they did not wish to antagonize their workforces. Additionally, most Federal troops were stationed in the riverside parishes, where they could prevent intimidation at the polls. Finally, in a few of these parishes, such as Tensas and its riverside neighbors, the Blacks outnumbered the whites by as many as ten to one, which meant that the whites were not able to intimidate Black voters without help from outside the Parish. Thus, the Knights of the White Camelia were unable to organize units that were capable of manipulating Republican voters in Tensas or similar parishes, as evidenced by the lopsided majorities that they gave to Grant.[53]

Henry's attitude toward the election results of 1868 seems to have been one of bitter resignation, but there was truth mixed with his irony when he wrote that the rebellion was still raging. For many of his compatriots throughout the South, this was only the beginning of a long decade of guerrilla warfare. At this time, however, radical Republicans still controlled Congress and did not hesitate to strengthen repressive measures in response to the fraud and violence that had tainted the 1868 elections in nearly every State of the South. Since local authorities refused to act on complaints of Blacks against whites, Congress enacted the Enforcement Act of 1870. Then, in response to growing numbers of outrages by masked riders, Congress enacted the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. Notwithstanding continuing Federal efforts, "…every election between 1868 and 1876 was marked by rampant violence and pervasive fraud."[54]

A Scanty and Precarious Subsistence

After a year of political tension and economic uncertainty, Henry apparently took a break and perhaps lived for a few months on his share of the Myrtle Grove cotton crop. After the harvest, Henry wrote to his parents on November 30, 1868, that they were continuing to derive "… a scanty and precarious subsistence from divers invisible sources."[55]

Henry never remained idle very long, however, and sometime during the early months of 1869, he invested his savings in a second exploratory trip to British Honduras. Two other former Confederate officers from Tensas Parish probably rekindled Henry's interest in this project. These two neighbors were Colonel J.F. Harrison, who had commanded the small Confederate force that attempted to resist the Federal occupation of Tensas Parish in 1863, and Captain William Buckner, who had served in the Tensas Cavalry. Buckner was probably the younger brother of Captain David Buckner, who had taken command of Henry's company, the Tensas Rifles, after the accidental shooting of Captain Charles B. Tenney. (See Chapter 7.) In 1868, Buckner and Harrison were part of a group of 14 men from the cotton-growing regions of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi who spent January and February investigating opportunities for investment and settlement in British and Spanish Honduras. During their tour, the group saw that the region had an excellent potential for sugar production but was altogether too humid for cotton culture. Since Harrison, Buckner, and other members of their group were cotton planters, they apparently decided that investing in British Honduras in a sector outside the area of their expertise would not be prudent.[56]

Henry Richardson was interested in the news that Harrison and Buckner brought back from Honduras. During Henry's first trip, he had discovered a country that had a future but not much of a present. Although the two returning explorers were not enthusiastic, they were favorably impressed with the progress that early settlers had made and especially with the potential of the area known as the Toledo Settlement in southern British Honduras. Good land down there was not free, but the colonial government allowed free settlement for five years, followed by payment over a second five-year term. Such facilities could seem attractive to a young man like Henry, who had little capital to invest. Additionally, since the new settlers were scratching their plantations out of virgin land and building everything, including roads, from zero, they

might welcome an associate with engineering experience. In sum, the news seemed good enough to warrant another reconnaissance trip, especially since Henry had no immediate prospects for employment close to home.[57]

What Henry saw during his second trip, however, was far from encouraging. Many of the early settlers had underestimated the difficulty of hacking a new plantation out of the wilderness, and their original optimism had completely turned around during the year since Harrison's and Bruckner's visit. They also mistakenly assumed they could treat their local workers like they had treated the slaves who had cleared their land back in Louisiana and Mississippi. This did not go over well with the locals, who refused to work for the new settlers. Thus, if Henry visited the Toledo Settlement, as he may have in February or March 1869, he saw many of the settlers discouraged, disorganized, and ready to go home. In short, although growing sugar cane in British Honduras was no way to get rich quickly, some of the settlers did have the grit and determination to hang on and earn precarious livings by raising sugar, bananas, and other crops. As for Henry Richardson, however, when he boarded the steamship *Trade Wind* to return to New Orleans in April 1869, it was the last time he would ply those waters.[58]

Henry's disappointing visits to British Honduras finally made him realize that he must adapt to the reality of living in a restored Federal Union. There was no reasonable alternative for him and his young wife. By 1871, his letters to his parents no longer contained disparaging remarks about Blacks and Reconstruction. While the war still raged, he had vowed that he would never forgive the Yankees. As the years passed, however, his passions cooled. In contrast with the members of the planter class, he did not suffer any loss in productive assets that might have fueled his resentment. Though he was penniless at the war's end, he had been far from wealthy when it began. His continuing connections with the North also left him open to Northern points of view. Nearly every year during the Reconstruction era, Henry traveled to New England, usually with Nannie and later with her and the children. During these trips, he could not have avoided some discussion of politics or refused to hear the opinions of Republican friends and relatives.[59]

Although Henry came to understand Northern points of view, he would never disavow his commitment to the Confederacy. On April 2, 1871, the Congregational church of Winthrop, Maine, dedicated a plaque

to the memory of the Reverend David Thurston, Henry's grandfather, an anti-slavery crusader who had served as pastor of the Winthrop Congregational Church for many years. Henry's father wrote, describing the ceremony:

> The first day of April (Saturday) your mother went to Winthrop and returned on Monday 3d. The occasion or her going was this: Hon. Seth May had prepared a marble tablet to the memory of the Rev. David Thurston, the same to be placed in the recess back of the pulpit of the Congregational church. He sent letters of invitation to the relatives and friends to be present at W. on the first Sabbath in April, and participate in the services pertaining to the occasion. Of family connexions there were present—Rev. Stephen Thurston D.D., Mrs. Sarah Buck, Dea. Wm. Thurston, Mrs Eunice F. Richardson, Dea. Brown Thurston and wife.[60]

Henry replied that one day he expected a monument to be erected in the honor of a certain other member of the family with the following inscription:

> True patriot he, for be it understood
> He left his country for his country's good.[61]

As Henry searched for employment, levee building was not the only strong point of his résumé: he had also had experience in railway construction in 1859 in Boston and in 1861 on a military line from Manassas Junction to Centreville. After the war, the Railway industry again became the growth sector of the national economy, and at the end of the 1860s, it had become the largest employer in the country. "Following the end of hostilities, Louisiana had limited funds to repair damaged railroads or to build new lines. Still, work progressed to rebuild the main antebellum railroads until the Panic of 1873 slowed the economy and brought a halt to much of the railroad construction throughout the country." By 1869, the railroad boom had progressed even to Louisiana, which enabled Henry to find work rebuilding the Vicksburg, Shreveport & Texas Railroad, which had been destroyed by Union and Confederate operations during the war. This was a trunk line that today runs from Tallulah, opposite Vicksburg on the Mississippi, to Shreveport, operating as the Delta Southern Railroad. On November 17,

1869, Henry wrote to his parents from Delhi in Richland Parish that they had completed the bridge across Bayou Macon and were laying track rapidly beyond Bayou Despair. The V.S.&T. Railroad Company was able to lay tracks to the town of Monroe before they ran out of money. Work was resumed only ten years later, and the railroad was completed to Shreveport in 1884. Small southern railroads, such as the V.S.&T., rarely offered stable employment due to their uncertain financing.[62]

By the middle of 1870, Henry and his bride were back at Myrtle Grove with Gus and Jennie. Nannie and Jennie's youngest brother, Field Montgomery Farrar, then three years old, was also staying with them during the 1870 census. In December 1870, Henry wrote to his parents that he had just returned from a tour of inspection of Louisiana and Arkansas levees. This was apparently a one-off consulting job since Henry remained unemployed for most of the following year. The young couple did not let this uncertainty discourage them, however, and their first child, Thomas Farrar Richardson, was born on September 28, 1871.[63]

Meanwhile, the outlook for levee construction began to look more promising. In 1870, the State provided financing to the extent of $7,000,000 in State bonds to The Louisiana Levee Company, a private corporation. In 1871, the State awarded the Louisiana Levee Company a contract under which the company was to reconstruct the levees along the Mississippi River, its branches, and outlets and keep them in repair for 21 years. The Company was to be paid for its work from a two per mill property tax. The Company began operations under a cloud of suspicion: Governor Warmoth was alleged to have a personal interest in the Company, and it was common knowledge that he had bribed legislators to approve the Company's contract with the State. Despite the generous conditions of their contract, the Company was frequently short of funds. They had hardly begun operations when the State was struck by widespread flooding in 1871. After that, they could never get ahead of the Mississippi's capricious torrents, and the Company was dissolved in 1876.[64]

From 1872 to 1873, the Louisiana Levee Company's largest project was rebuilding the Kempe Levee in Tensas Parish, and Henry Richardson was apparently the project engineer.

> We have had glorious weather for ploughing during the past week. The air has been so balmy, that people hard pressed for

> means to keep fires going, have begun to think that the old Winter God has yielded his sceptre to mild-eyed May, and that we would have no more use this winter for fires and overcoats. The buds have actually begun to peep forth upon some of the trees, and everything in nature indicates an early and forward spring. Most of the planters have done a great deal of work, and some have planted corn. The tawny river in our front glides sleepily along far within its banks, while usually at this period of the year, it begins to threaten inundation. This fact is accepted by the "oldest inhabitants" as a harbinger of a low water year. Kemp's levee will soon be alive with Irishmen, convicts and the "Heathen Chinee," repairing it under the energetic superintendence of the contractor. Our fellow citizen, Maj. H.B. Richardson, is now in the service of the Levee Company, and he will keep a keen eye to the interests of his parish as far as levees are concerned. Altogether the outlook is promising to the parish of Tensas for the year 1872.[65]

Several levees had been built on this site over the years, but the riverbanks were low behind the Kempe Bend, and the current was exceptionally strong at that point during the high waters in springtime. As previous levees failed, Kempe's Lee Plantation had progressively lost many acres of its best riverside land, and the Mississippi had even swallowed Tom and Margaret Kempe's beautiful home. Following the floods of 1871, the riverbanks caved so massively that the departing earth formed a new island in the middle of the river. The bank had caved right up to the base of the existing levee, which obviously would not resist the next flood. A new levee had to be built further back from the advancing waters, thereby taking even more acreage from the Kempe's and neighboring landowners. If the flood waters broke through the Kempe Levee, they would surely inundate a large part of the Parish as they had during the disastrous flood of 1867. The Louisiana Levee Company apparently carried out temporary protective work, which saved the existing levee during the moderate spring floods of 1872.[66]

Still, a new levee had to be built further back from the receding riverbank, and work began in October 1872:

> Mr. P.J. Kennedy, under a contract with the Louisiana Levee Company, through sub-contractors, has commenced the work of

rebuilding what is known as the Kemp levee. This levee is located on the right bank of the river, in Tensas parish, about four hundred and twenty-five miles above New Orleans, and four or five miles below the town of St. Joseph.…

The dimensions of the Kemp levee, in its completed state, will be four miles in length, sixty-one feet base, fifteen and a half feet in height, in some places reaching twenty-five feet, and in shape an elliptic curve. As the bank is still caving at that point, the levee is located one mile from the river.

The force employed in the work of construction, at present, is between 1500 and 2000 men….[67]

By the end of 1874, the Kempe Levee was still standing, but many more levees were needed along the lower Mississippi. According to Jeff Thompson, the Chief State Engineer, neither the Louisiana Levee Company nor the State could afford to build them, and the planters' best hope was an appropriation from Congress.[68]

The Louisiana Levee Company was losing its fight for life. Before operations could even begin, their ultimate clients, the cotton planters, were hit by two successive difficult years, thus giving many of them an excuse not to pay their taxes. Others refused to pay taxes because they disputed the legitimacy of carpetbagger Governor Kellogg. On top of that came the financial Panic of 1873 and the depression set off by the failure of the prestigious New York banking house of Jay Cooke and Co. This made it nearly impossible for the Company or even the State to raise additional funds through the banks or bond markets. By 1874, it was also evident that the State had not fulfilled its obligations under the contract and had failed to pay the $1,700,000 that it owed the Company. With its Treasury nearly empty, the State proposed to make up the shortfall by issuing an equivalent amount of bonds to the Company. The holders of existing bonds, however, sued to prevent this because it violated their creditors' agreement with the State, and in 1875, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the bondholders' position.[69]

Still, the Chief State Engineer expected that necessary levee work in Tensas Parish would continue in 1874:

New Orleans, Jan. 12, 1874.

Hon. H.R. Steele, St. Joseph, La.

In answer to your inquiries about the levees in Tensas parish, I

> can simply state that the Point Pleasant, Disharoon, Hard Scrabble and upper Bondurant have been staked, and are now under contract and will most undoubtedly be built before the spring freshets. In regard to the Buck Ridge levee, I must state that the commission of engineers do not think it necessary to raise the grade this season, as the effects of the cut off and the outlets near the Arkansas line will keep the flood-level reduced for several years yet. The same can be said of the Waterproof levee. Altogether, I think Tensas is perfectly safe for the coming high water season.
>
> I will be up in a few days on my monthly reconnoisance, when I will explain in detail the "faith that is in me."
>
> M. Jeff. Thompson
> Chief State Engineer[70]

Despite the Levee Company's problems, Henry had benefited from a regular salary for several years and was even able to send money to help support his parents. It seemed too good to last, however, and he again wrote on April 7, 1873, "The Louisiana Levee Co. will in a few days suspend active operations…. The undersigned will soon be a gentlemanly loafer." Fortunately, the Company managed to organize a temporary respite, and Henry was still working on the levees a year later, although his salary had been reduced to $150 per month. Henry was probably happy to have that much to support his growing family: on October 26, 1873, Nannie gave birth to their second child, Mary Wolcott Richardson. It is uncertain how long the Company was able to pay Henry's salary, but there was still plenty of work to do in the winter of 1873–74. In January, the Chief State Engineer assured Parish Judge Hiram Steele that four more parish levees would be built before the spring high waters.[71]

The South Will Rise Again

During the 1872 election campaign, the national economy was still riding the wave of post-war prosperity driven by the boom in railroad construction. The Republican Convention nominated President Grant unanimously for a second term, but the united Republican front was beginning to come apart. A dissatisfied minority broke away and held a separate convention of Liberal Republicans, which nominated New York

newspaperman Horace Greeley for President. The splinter party's platform called for the end of Reconstruction and civil service reform. The Democrats joined the minority "Liberal Republicans" in nominating Greeley.

The Amnesty Act of 1872 had restored Henry Richardson's right to vote, and he took the 1872 elections very seriously. He had read a newspaper article stating that Confederate General Jubal Early favored President Grant's reelection in November. Henry knew Early fairly well because he had served on his staff when Early replaced the wounded General Ewell, and he wrote to him asking if it was true that he favored Grant. Early replied that he would support neither Grant nor Greeley and asked Henry to send a correction to the newspaper on his behalf.[72]

President Grant was reelected by a wide margin in 1872, thanks to his as-yet untarnished popularity in the North and the support of those Blacks in the South who could still vote. Nevertheless, the reconstructed State governments that the radical Republicans had imposed on the South soon showed signs of weakness, due mainly to better organization by determined white opponents of Reconstruction. This opposition first bore its bitter fruit in Louisiana.

In 1872, the Republican party in Louisiana was weakened by an acrimonious split between its regular, or "Radical," wing and those who supported carpetbag Governor Henry Clay Warmoth. The leaders of the radical Republicans were Federal Marshal Stephen B. Packard and Customs Director James F. Casey (President Grant's brother-in-law). They were headquartered in the Customs House, which led the Democrats to disdain them as "the Customs House gang." Governor Warmoth attempted to broaden his Republican base in the white community by limiting the implementation of Reconstruction policy. This orientation alienated him from the radicals. When Warmoth vetoed a law that would have strengthened enforcement of Black social integration, he lost support from Black voters. Without support from white radicals and Blacks, he had little chance of reelection.[73]

In July 1872, the radicals excluded the Warmoth faction from any role in the Republican State convention and nominated carpetbag Senator William P. Kellogg for Governor. Warmoth then organized a separate convention that took the label of the Liberal Republican Party and voted for a fusion ticket with the Democrats. The 1872 election for Governor of Louisiana thus became a contest between James McEnery, nominee of

the Democratic-Liberal Republican coalition, and carpetbagger William P. Kellogg, nominee of the regular Republican Party.[74]

After an election again marked by corruption and intimidation, each side claimed victory. Governor Warmoth appointed a Returning Board to determine the validity of disputed votes in parishes where irregularities were alleged. This Board ruled in favor of McEnery, but their decision was also disputed. A second Returning Board ruled for Kellogg, and then a third Board ruled again for McEnery. Although two of the three boards had favored McEnery, a Federal District judge ruled that Kellogg had won, and the regular Republicans occupied the State House with the support of Federal troops. The legislature then brought impeachment charges against outgoing Governor Warmoth, which forced him to relinquish his office before the end of his term. Kellogg's ally, Lieutenant Governor P.L.B. Pinchback, then served as Governor until Kellogg was inaugurated.[75]

Political maneuvers continued into 1873, but Tensas Parish remained calm, and Henry Richardson was once again busy with levee repair, as he wrote to his parents:

> Louisiana is blessed with two or three governors, and we have an election here every day or two to fill the place of some Hon. Senator or another who has been bought out by one side and expelled by the other. I have been too busy to take much interest in the matter….[76]

Other Louisiana whites, however, took the matter seriously. The Democratic candidate, James McEnery, continued to claim victory and went so far as to organize a rival government supported by militia units. On March 5, McEnery's New Orleans militia tried to seize key New Orleans police stations, but that attempted coup d'état was aborted by the threatened intervention of Federal troops.[77]

Meanwhile, tension was growing in the village of Colfax, the seat of Grant Parish, where the two rival Governors recognized different parish governments. The judge and sheriff certified by McEnery moved into the courthouse first, but occupied their offices only part-time. On March 25, after receiving certification from Kellogg, the radical Republicans took possession of the Judge's and Sheriff's offices after breaking into the empty courthouse. In response to the growing menace of armed white intervention, white Republican Sheriff Daniel Shaw organized a posse

comitatus, and Black State House Representative William Ward, who was also the local militia captain and a Union Army veteran, mustered the local Black militia. Efforts to negotiate a compromise at the local level failed, and tensions mounted as each side gathered men and arms. Captain Ward, Republican Judge Register, and others went to New Orleans to plead for reinforcements with Governor Kellogg and General Emory, who commanded Federal troops, but both responded too late. Meanwhile, about 300 Blacks—militia and refugees—had assembled in and around the Colfax Courthouse.[78]

By Easter Sunday, April 13, some 140 whites in militia groups from Grant Parish and the surrounding parishes were ready for the final assault on the Courthouse. White Republicans had left, and Black Union Army veteran Levin Allen remained in charge of the defending Black militia. After Allen refused a summons to surrender, opposing Captain Christopher Columbus Nash allowed time for the evacuation of women and children and then ordered the final assault.[79]

Three white men and 280 Black men were killed, many of them after they had surrendered. Federal officials arrested and indicted 97 white participants for conspiracy to deny victims of the Colfax massacre their civil rights under the 1870 Enforcement Act. The indictment was later reduced to nine men, of whom three were convicted. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, overturned the guilty verdicts while declaring part of the Enforcement Act unconstitutional. This decision, United States v. Cruikshank, marked the end of Federal efforts to enforce Black rights for nearly a century.[80]

White resistance to Reconstruction spread and intensified in 1874 with the organization of White League chapters throughout Louisiana. The first White League group met at the Opelousas Courthouse in St. Landry Parish in late April 1874, and the movement quickly spread to other parishes along the Red River. The new Democratic Sheriff of Grant Parish, Christopher Columbus Nash, led the forced ouster of Republican officeholders at Natchitoches in June. He is also said to have participated in the ouster of six Republicans at Coushatta in August, which led to their execution as they were leaving the State. The avowed goal of the White Leagues was to restore white rule in Louisiana using any means necessary, including intimidation and violence. Their leadership by hardened Confederate veterans such as Sheriff Nash meant that the Leagues were better disciplined than the Knights of the White Camelia and that their well-planned operations were more effective. After those

indicted in the Colfax trials were acquitted, White League members felt immune from Federal prosecution and did not take pains to hide their identities. On the contrary, they appeared to seek publicity and newspaper coverage of their operations.[81]

Meanwhile, a powerful paramilitary White League was being organized in New Orleans under the leadership of Davidson Penn, the Democratic claimant to the Lieutenant Governorship. On September 14, 1874, 5000 White Leaguers and their hangers-on took over New Orleans in the hope of installing defeated candidate John McEnery as Governor. In a pitched battle, the League rapidly overcame 3500 Metropolitan Police and State Militia. Even Police cannons and a Gatling gun did not deter the League attackers, as snipers placed in adjacent buildings picked off the gunners. Governor Kellogg, however, remained safe in the Customs House, where he had taken refuge before the battle. Since John McEnery was absent, Davidson Penn took possession of the Governor's office, and the insurgents retained control of the city center, including the State House, City Hall, and the Armory, for three days. No lynching or indiscriminate killing took place following the battle, which is a testimony to the League's discipline and organization. The White Leaguers withdrew peaceably only on the arrival of Federal troops that President Grant sent to restore order.[82]

Most of the 5000 additional troops that President Grant had sent to New Orleans remained in Louisiana throughout the 1874 election campaign, which probably explains why the campaign was relatively calm. Certainly, there was fraud and intimidation, especially in the rural areas, but there were few reports of violence. The returning board named by Governor Kellogg awarded 53 seats in the State Assembly to each party, which left five undecided seats to be awarded by the Assembly itself. This solution pleased neither Democrats nor Republicans, who struggled over majority control until March, when U.S. Congressman William A. Wheeler went to New Orleans and negotiated a compromise that gave the Assembly to the Democrats and the Senate to the Republicans.[83]

The Republicans fared badly in the national mid-term elections of 1874 due to the economic depression following the Panic of 1873, the implication of national Republican party leaders and cabinet members in financial scandals, and the growing public disillusion with the policies of Radical Reconstruction. Republicans lost their majority in the House of Representatives to the Democrats by a landslide and saw their Senate

majority reduced by nine votes. The deaths of the radical Republican leaders, Congressman Thaddeus Stevens and Senator Charles Sumner, further diminished Republicans' will and ability to reform the South. This left Reconstruction largely in the hands of President Grant, whose position was weakened by the loss of Republican support and growing impatience in the North with the policy of continuing military intervention in the South.[84]

In Louisiana, Governor Kellogg remained in office to the end of his term thanks only to the continued support of Federal troops. His regime, however, exercised little power outside of New Orleans and could not collect taxes in much of the State. The White Leagues continued to spring up in the rural parishes, where they acted as the military arm of the Democratic Party.[85]

In Tensas Parish, however, where Henry Richardson lived at the time, voters gave large majorities to Republican candidates for national and State offices in the 1874 elections. Tensas Parish voters had voted Republican since the election of 1868, which was conducted in an orderly manner and without any accusations of fraud. Republicans owed their victories to Black voters, who outnumbered white voters by ten to one. During the earlier elections, the Republican Party had nominated white candidates for the main local and State offices. From 1872 onward, however, Republicans began to share these offices with Black candidates: J. Ross Stewart was elected to the State Assembly in 1872 and reelected in 1874 and 1876. Several Blacks were elected to local offices, including Sheriff, Recorder, and Police Juror (equivalent to county supervisor in other states).[86]

Republicans, Black and white, continued to govern Tensas Parish until 1878, and two white Democrats testified to a United States Senate Committee that the Parish was run satisfactorily during that time. Judging by transcripts of their speech in the Committee's report, most of the Black leaders appeared reasonably well-educated and competent. White Democrats in Tensas Parish were no happier with William P. Kellogg as Governor than were other Louisiana Democrats. During the early 1870s, however, they reconciled themselves to cooperation with the local Republican majority, which was necessary to maintain a willing Black workforce in the parish. Most white Democrats also tolerated Black participation in government, probably because the Blacks in parish government were also the community leaders who maintained a semblance of social solidarity in the parish. Following the outrages

committed by White League elements in Colfax and Coushatta, an editorial in the local newspaper proclaimed that "The best feeling has always prevailed between all classes of our population" … and strongly denied that any organization such as the White League existed in Tensas Parish.[87]

In 1877, 16% of Black voters in Tensas Parish could write their names, which suggests that many were able to make intelligent choices when voting. Like other freedmen throughout Louisiana, Tensas Blacks sought schooling for their children, and local Republican majorities obliged. In 1863, General Banks's administration had opened seven schools in New Orleans. Early in 1864, the army's efforts were supplemented by teachers from the American Missionary Association in New Orleans and the rural parishes; these were the first schools to admit Black children in Tensas and neighboring parishes. In March 1864, Banks appointed a three-man board of education for the State, which gradually took over the schools the AMA had established and hired many of their teachers. These first teachers, mostly young spinsters from the North, suffered difficult working and living conditions. They were also ostracized by local whites, who believed that Black education was useless if not disruptive to society. Banks had ordered that every parish establish at least one school for all children under 12, to be supported by parish taxes on property valuations and cotton. Plantation workers over 12 could not be admitted to such schools. Whites refused to let their children attend these integrated schools, which meant that many poor whites remained poorly educated. Governor Michael Hahn, who took office on March 4, 1864, was a strong advocate of universal education and Black suffrage and continued to implement the policies adopted by General Banks. The State Constitution of 1868 obliged the legislature to create a free public school system for Blacks and whites, and Republican legislators supported those goals.[88]

> In 1873, Tensas Parish boasted fifteen schools and a "larger school fund than almost any other parish" in Northeast Louisiana, bragged the local newspaper. The school fund swelled because parish taxes, at the behest of Republican voters, fell heavily on the landholding elite.[89]

The local newspaper expressed satisfaction about the condition of the schools, adding that

> Great credit is due to the School Board, and to their efficient superintendent, Mr. Henry, for having secured a superior class of teachers for our parish, the majority of them being college students of unexceptional moral character; young men full of courage and pride in the work which they have undertaken. The future history of the colored people depends greatly upon our system of education, and we are glad to see that the funds are properly expended….[90]

New schools were not the only public works the Tensas Republicans brought to the Parish. Low-lying cotton fields were prey to frequent floods, which, if they did not completely ruin prospects for successful crops, at least obliged planters and their workers to replant their fields after the high waters receded. Thanks to the leadership of a rising young politician named Charles C. Cordill, the Parish imposed taxes on cotton growers to finance the reconstruction of levees that had been destroyed or allowed to deteriorate during the war. Since Henry Richardson was working for the Louisiana Levee Company and was based in Tensas Parish from 1872 to 1874, he had regular contact with Cordill, who was President of the Police Jury. At any rate, both Henry and his father-in-law knew Charles Cordill fairly well; Cordill was associated with Gus Bass in the exploitation of the 1868 Myrtle Grove cotton crop, according to his obituary in the *Tensas Gazette*, which meant that he was also associated with Thomas P. Farrar and Henry B. Richardson in that operation.[91]

The Louisiana Levee Company appears to have ceased operations by the end of 1874, which would mean that Henry Richardson was again unemployed. Because of the continuing economic depression, prospects were not encouraging in the railroad sector either, where more than half the country's railroads were in receivership. Nevertheless, by 1876, Henry was employed as Chief Engineer of the "Natchez Railroad." This was certainly the Natchez, Jackson and Columbia Railroad, which was chartered in 1870 as the Natchez & Jackson Railroad, the only line under construction near Natchez at the time. Its name was changed to The Natchez, Jackson & Columbia Railroad in 1872 and construction was completed on October 6, 1882. The founder and President of the line was former Confederate Major General William T. Martin, who may have known Henry when he was an engineering staff officer in Virginia. After the war, Martin was the head of the white conservative movement in Natchez and the leader of the Adams County white militia. "Martin

reflected the values of the planter class, which stood in opposition to … black equality." Despite his conservative leanings, Martin and his friends had worked with local Black and white Republican officials to obtain financing for their railroad as early as 1872. Two bond issues in Adams County failed in 1871 and 1872 due to opposition in Rodney, Mississippi, which the railroad did not serve. Finally, a successful bond issue in Hinds County enabled construction to proceed.[92]

By the middle of May 1876, Henry had brought Nannie and the children to Natchez. Since the birth of John Francis Richardson on March 21, 1876, Nannie had three children to manage, and she must have been pleased to arrive in Natchez in time to spend the summer there. Thanks to its site on a bluff high above the Mississippi, Natchez has a healthier climate than low-lying Tensas Parish across the river. The social life was also more agreeable, and Nannie's grand-aunt, Frances Kempe Sprague, and her cousin, Margaret "Missy" Winchester, arranged for the Richardsons to know the right people. Thus, Henry and his growing family found themselves in a comfortable situation as the era of Reconstruction drew to a close.[93]

The Natchez, Jackson, and Columbia Railroad reached Fayette, Mississippi, by 1876, but the company did not have sufficient funds to continue construction toward Jackson. Henry Richardson was once again unemployed. Martin eventually raised private financing from a group of Natchez businessmen, which enabled the railroad to reach Jackson in 1882. By that time, however, Henry had found more interesting work.[94]

Earlier in 1876, Henry's brother, John, had proposed that they meet in Philadelphia and visit the Centennial Exposition of 1876. Henry hesitated due to his commitments to the railroad, but when construction halted, he was free to go. In October, he took the steamer *Robert E. Lee* to Vicksburg, where he telegraphed John to meet him in Philadelphia and then proceeded eastward by train. After the Exposition, they both visited their parents and the Peabodys in Gilead, Maine. Henry did not write much in his World's Fair notebook, but the exhibits he saw there must have impressed him. The Centennial Exposition was a signal to the world that the United States was no longer simply a nation of farmers but was fast becoming—indeed, had already become—an industrial power that would have to be reckoned with in international politics as well as world trade. Exhibits such as the massive 1400-horsepower Corliss engine with its wheel 40 feet high must have stirred the hope in

the visitors that scientists and engineers might succeed—where statesmen and generals had so often failed—in making the world a better place. This symbolism was not lost on any of the visitors to the Exposition, and certainly not on an engineer like Henry.[95]

Another central aim of the Exposition was to promote sectional amity and reconciliation. Since the Nation had endured for 100 years and was gradually healing its wounds after a devastating Civil War, perhaps the Union was destined to be a lasting one after all. Southern State governments, however, were not yet enthusiastic about pursuing these objectives; only Mississippi and Arkansas among the Southern states appropriated funds for State exhibits at the Exposition.[96]

Louisiana Redeemed

The elections of November 1876, following Henry's visit to the Fair, brought more immediate hope to the South—or at least to its white ruling classes. Democratic Governors had regained power in all the southern States, and although the results were contested in Louisiana and South Carolina and at the national level, the final arbitrages would set the South squarely on the road to "Redemption" and would determine the course of Henry Richardson's career for the next 30 years.

In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes was elected as a minority President in a contest that curiously resembled the Bush–Gore confrontation of 2000. As in the later election, there was considerable evidence of fraud in the Florida voting, but in 1876, the results in South Carolina and Louisiana were also suspect. None of the three states had yet been redeemed—that is, returned to home rule—which meant that State electoral commissions could easily swing the elections to the Republican Hayes if they chose. That is what happened in Florida, which left South Carolina and Louisiana as the states that could swing the election either way.

The situations in both states were doubly complicated because both the State and the national elections were in doubt. Two rival State governments were vying for control of the administrations in each state. In New Orleans, the Republican legislators, with gubernatorial candidate Stephen B. Packard, controlled the State House, better known as the St. Louis Hotel, which stretched along St. Louis Street from Chartres Street to Royal Street. The Republicans, however, controlled nothing but that one building, under the protection of 1000 Federal troops. In January, the rival Democrat government, backed by 3000 well-organized

White League militiamen, took over the rest of the city, including the police stations, the Supreme Court, and the Louisiana State Arsenal. The Democratic claimant, Francis R.T. Nicholls, proceeded to organize a counter-government which gained de facto control over most of the State. Nicholls's emissaries then began to negotiate for recognition from Washington. Nicholls continued to blockade Packard's government while restraining his White League supporters from any further provocation. President Grant had instructed Federal troops to remain neutral, and Nicholls strove to avoid giving him any excuse to intervene on Packard's behalf.[97]

Meanwhile, back in Washington, an Electoral Commission established by Congress had awarded the votes of both States to Hayes, but a Democratic filibuster blocked the counting of the electoral votes, which also blocked the election of Hayes. Behind the scenes, however, a group of southern Democrats was negotiating with northern Republicans. Hayes's supporters eventually agreed that if elected, Hayes would end all vestiges of Reconstruction in the South and withdraw support from the Republican gubernatorial contenders in South Carolina and Louisiana. This agreement came to be known as the Compromise of 1877. On March 1, 1877, the Democratic filibuster ceased, and Hayes was elected three days later. On April 24, 1877, Federal troops withdrew from their positions protecting the State House, and the Nicholls administration and legislature moved in the following day.[98]

Thus ended the long frustration of Reconstruction, and thus began the curiously named era of Redemption. For 13 years, military and Reconstruction governments had not been able—in fact, had hardly tried—to overturn the economic and social structures of the Old South. However, they had effectively blocked the dominant social and economic classes from exercising their power. The result had been a near stalemate that was frustrating to all sides. With Nicholls's victory, the Redeemers felt free to promote local interests as well as local ideas. Looking back, it becomes clear that it was the ruling classes that were redeemed, not the overall governance of the State. Redemption era Louisiana represents one of the blackest periods of civic life that the United States has ever known.

Not that the new era began so badly, at least for those who were redeemed, such as members of the antebellum ruling class and former Confederate Army Officers. In May 1877, Governor Nicholls, a former Confederate Brigadier General, appointed Benjamin Morgan Harrod as

Chief State Engineer and Thomas S. Hardee and Henry B. Richardson as Assistant Engineers. These were obvious and logical choices. All three men were former Confederate engineering staff officers who had served the cause valiantly and could be trusted by the Redeemers. Harrod was a native of New Orleans with a Harvard education and architectural and engineering experience. Harrod was also favorably known or recommended to Nicholls because he had been an officer in the Crescent City White League during the attempted coup d'état of 1874. Hardee had an impressive resumé with a long list of engineering jobs at local and State levels. And few men knew more about Mississippi River flood control than Henry Richardson, who had built his first levee in Tensas Parish in 1860 and who had been working to rebuild and maintain the levees of the alluvial Parishes whenever the planters could spare enough money to pay him and sometimes even when they could not. Thanks to the victory of the Redeemers and the end of Reconstruction, Henry finally had a steady job at the age of 41.[99]

Chapter 10
Redemption

When Francis R.T. Nicholls was elected Governor of Louisiana and President Hayes recognized his election, many of his constituents expected this honest man to keep the promises he had made when the Democratic Party nominated him. At that time,

> He declared that if elected he would enter office untrammeled by any clique; that he would enforce laws without regard to race or color; that he would give office to no one for supporting him; and expressed his abhorrence of any kind of election fraud. In harmony with these utterances was the platform adopted by the convention, which demanded protection for colored voters in the exercise of the franchise, accepted as final the three wartime amendments to the Federal Constitution, and generally declared for an efficient and economical government.[1]

Such expectations were not unreasonable since Nicholls was a newcomer to State politics and had not yet been obliged to compromise with political reality. Whether the Democratic Party would respect its platform—particularly the plank regarding protection for Black voters—was another matter.

Assistant State Engineer

In 1877, when Henry Richardson took his job with the State, he had high hopes for the future of levee construction. Since his return from the war, he had been frustrated by the inadequate efforts made by parish authorities and by the failure of the Warmoth administration's attempt to outsource the task to the under-financed Louisiana Levee Company. Now that the State government had taken direct responsibility for flood

control through the State Board of Engineers, Henry had reasons to believe that progress could be made.

One of the most important interest groups in the State was still that of the large cotton planters, especially those in the Mississippi riverside parishes of Concordia, Tensas, Madison, and East Carroll in Northern Louisiana, which became Levee District 4 in 1878. This was Henry's main area of responsibility as Assistant State Engineer. During the Reconstruction era, these planters faced difficult times. We have seen how hard it was for them to organize a dependable labor force while paying the near-starvation wages or crop shares that made the plantation system economically viable. They also suffered from falling prices in the world cotton market due to the emergence of competing suppliers in Latin America, Asia, and Africa during the Civil War. Excessive flooding was one problem the new government could address, but could never completely resolve without spending massive sums of money. Nevertheless, because inundations had so often wiped out crops, the State had to make serious efforts to control floods. This posed a conundrum to the Bourbon planters, who would benefit the most from flood control but who were strongly opposed to higher taxes.[2]

Indeed, the Board of State Engineers' biggest problem was financing. Levee maintenance and construction should have been an absolute priority for the State government since the economy was still centered around cotton and sugar. Still, legislators were understandably reluctant to increase taxes on an agricultural sector that was hardly thriving. In his address to the legislature in January 1878, Governor Nicholls reported that contracts for 1,030,000 cubic yards of levee construction had been signed at a cost of $242,500 in 1877. Necessary levee work for 1878 was estimated at $1,475,000 cubic yards. The Governor recognized that financing was inadequate for urgently needed levee construction projects and outlined the possibilities for improving the situation:

- To establish local levee districts in which planters would be taxed on the value of their production, thus placing the burden on those who would most benefit from the expenditure.
- To authorize the use of convict labor on public works projects, although the convicts were then fully occupied building the New Orleans and Pacific Railroad.

- To continue to finance levee construction out of the general revenues even though revenues expected for levee construction had already been allocated to projects underway.[3]

In 1878, the legislature acted on all three of the Governor's proposals and even accepted a special session in March to resolve the problems of defining five new levee districts. These districts covered all the alluvial lands of the State and were empowered to levy a tax of up to five mills on the value of all cash crops and one mill on all taxable property in the districts. The State Engineers were to advise the district commissioners of the levee work needed in their districts with cost estimates. For the year 1878, the State would continue to finance levee work from general revenues through a three-per-mill property tax, which would be reduced to one-per-mill in 1879. The Governor did not propose rebuilding any of the State's largest levees, such as those at Bonnet Carré, Morganza, or Ashton, which large crevasses had long rendered ineffective. Those projects, he believed, were beyond the State's financial capacity and should rightfully be financed by the Federal government.[4]

When Congress established the Mississippi River Commission on June 28, 1879, they also raised expectations that Federal appropriations for flood control would soon follow. For several years, however, Congress refused to appropriate funds for flood control and insisted that the Commission concentrate on improving navigation and leave flood control to the states. (See Chapter 11.) Eventually, Congress would enlarge the Commission's mandate, a development that Benjamin Morgan Harrod, the first Commission member from Louisiana, encouraged. Harrod was appointed to the Commission on June 28, 1879, and continued to serve as Chief State Engineer until the end of 1879, when he was obliged to resign by a provision of the new State Constitution that forbade coterminous service in State and Federal offices. Governor Nicholls, whose mandate ended in January 1880, left the choice of Harrod's successor to the new Governor. The two Assistant State Engineers were both qualified for the job. Henry Richardson's professional competence was well known throughout the Bourbon-controlled North. Governor Wiltz, however, chose Thomas S. Hardee, who was better known through his service as New Orleans City Surveyor and who appeared better qualified due to his previous experience as the Chief State Engineer of Mississippi.[5]

Henry may have been just as happy to stay in St. Joseph, where he was a respected member of the local community. By today's standards, Henry, Nannie, and their three children had little space in the home they shared with Nannie's parents, her brother Field, and her grandmother, but Henry seemed content. Since his principal duties involved levee construction and maintenance, it was logical for him to live in Tensas Parish, close to his main center of activity. From there, he could easily travel to construction sites in neighboring parishes or New Orleans for meetings of the State Board of Engineers.[6]

In addition to planning and supervising new projects, Henry's duties included participation in the annual survey of levees, watercourses and other public works, furnishing estimates and specifications for necessary work, advising police juries in his area of responsibility on required work in their parishes, and examining and certifying completed work under his charge. From the summer of 1878 onward, he probably also assisted the Chief Engineer in preparing the estimates of required work that were presented to the Commissioners of the levee districts in his area of responsibility.[7]

One of Henry's first projects in 1877 was to prepare for and supervise the reconstruction of the Bass Levee in East Carroll Parish. This project would cause legal problems for Henry and the State because the new levee was built on a path that excluded Abraham Bass's plantation from protection against flooding. When the plantation was flooded in 1878, Bass sued the State, and the Fifth District Court ruled in his favor with an award of $75,000. However, the Supreme Court of Louisiana overruled the lower court mainly on the grounds the work was done "in the exercise of the police power." Of course, the police power alone would not have freed the State from an obligation to compensate Abraham Bass. The reason Bass did not receive compensation was that the State of Louisiana held a servitude on riverside property. This servitude, said to be derived from the Napoleonic Code, existed before the United States purchased Louisiana and was carried forward in the Civil Code of Louisiana as follows: "Servitudes imposed for the public or common utility relate to the space which is to be left for public use by the adjacent proprietors, on the shores of navigable rivers, and for the making and repairing of levees, roads, and other public or common works." This servitude has been cited in several cases subsequent to Bass vs. the State of Louisiana and has been extremely useful to the State, which has not hesitated to use it to facilitate levee construction.[8]

The next year, Henry was busy with the Bondurant and Buckridge Levees in Tensas Parish. He was responsible for Levee District 3, as well as Districts 4 and 5, and in 1877, he accompanied Chief Engineer Harrod to examine navigation problems at Tones Bayou, above Shreveport on the Red River, and on Bayou Courtableau in St. Landry Parish. However, District 4, comprising the cotton-growing parishes along the Mississippi, took up most of his time. In 1879, there was more work on the Bondurant Levee and the Ford Field Extensions in Tensas Parish, and the Raleigh and All Right Levees in East Carroll Parish. In 1880, the Bondurant Levee needed more work, along with the Hard Times Levee in Tensas. These contracts were for relatively small topping-up or repair jobs, which no one expected would withstand extraordinarily high flood waters such as those of 1874.[9]

Redeeming Tensas Parish

Despite Henry Richardson's oft-proclaimed aversion to politics, October 1878 found him in the middle of a political imbroglio he could not escape. As the local, State, and Congressional elections approached, the redeemers of the Democratic Party in several rural parishes vowed to overturn local Republican majorities and thus restore white supremacy wherever Black voters held a majority; historian Nell Irvin Painter described their tactics with succinct accuracy:

> Democrats intended first to isolate Black Republicans, then paralyze them politically. Through intimidation and inducement, they lured white Republicans into the Democratic ranks; nightriding and assassination effectively eliminated Black Republican opposition.[10]

The Democratic redeemers of rural Louisiana regarded their Party's 1876 platform as pure political double talk that was not applicable to their parishes. Tensas, where Henry Brown Richardson was living at the time, was one of the parishes where Democratic minorities used intimidation, violence, fake news, and outright fraud to dominate the 1878 mid-term elections. The allegations of fraud and violence in Tensas Parish and elsewhere in the South provoked such indignation in Washington, D.C., that a sub-committee of five United States Senators went to New Orleans in January 1879 and heard dozens of witnesses

recount their recollections of events during the election campaign in Louisiana. The reports of the sub-committee's hearings, which continued in Washington in February, provide a lengthy, detailed, and often eloquent condemnation of the racist violence that accompanied redemption in several Louisiana parishes. This Report is the primary documentary support for the summary of events in Tensas Parish that follows.[11]

As long as Republican majorities held statewide power, the Black and white communities in Tensas Parish managed to cooperate peacefully, and members of the Black community, which greatly outnumbered whites in the Parish, even participated in local and State government. Given President Hayes's policy of reconciliation, to which Governor Nicholls had at least given lip service, local Black and white Republicans might still presume they could run for local, state, and national offices.[12]

Tensas Democrats, however, had other plans. On October 5, 1878, Alfred Fairfax, a Baptist minister and the Black Republican leader in the Waterproof area, went to Saint Joseph to attend a Republican convention. Before the meeting, he wanted to talk with State Senator A.J. Bryant, the Black Republican leader from Newellton. He found him in conversation with two white politicians, Parish Judge Charles C. Cordill and Theodore C. Sachse, representative of Tensas Parish on the Democratic Executive Committee for the Fifth Congressional District. Judge Cordill had been elected on a Republican ticket since 1874, and Fairfax was surprised when Cordill volunteered that he would not join the Republican ticket that year. Cordill explained, "I know if I was to run on that ticket I would be killed…" and Sachse joined in, "[W]e don't propose to be misrepresented any longer; we don't intend to be imposed on by ignorant men that can't represent us in the legislature." Fairfax tried patiently to reason with the two whites, but when Sachse began replying with veiled menaces, he and Bryant left to prepare their convention.[13]

They walked over to the Courthouse and called the convention to order, but not a single white Republican showed up. Various Black delegates reported that none of their white Republican contacts would accept a position on the ticket. The Black delegates did not want to "draw the color line" by proposing an all-Black ticket because they knew that white residents of the Parish would consider that as a menace to their community. Some of the delegates, including Bryant, were reluctant even to put up a ticket, but Fairfax and J. Ross Stewart insisted they must not back down. The convention decided to appoint a committee to

confer with the Democrats and see if they could find some way to cooperate.[14]

On October 7, Fairfax again met Cordill, who confirmed his refusal to join a Republican ticket, and went on to say,

> I cannot go any farther with it, for I am satisfied that what they have done in other parishes they will do in this parish.…[Y]ou know very well how they have been bulldozing in other parishes, and I would advise you as a friend not to have anything more to do with the convention.

Fairfax replied that since he had been nominated on the Republican ticket for Congress, he felt obliged to maintain his candidacy unless he was prevented by violence.[15]

During the Democratic convention later that day, the delegates voted on a motion by Mr. Sachse to reject the Republican proposal for a conference to discuss cooperation between the two parties. The convention then nominated an all-white, all-Democratic ticket that included former Republicans Charles C. Cordill for Representative to the State legislature and incumbent John W. Register for Sheriff. Mr. L.V. Reeves, President of the convention, concluded the session by declaring, "…we will not hurt anyone unless there is opposition to the ticket we have just nominated, but if there is opposition in the way, we will quietly remove it."[16]

Some Democrats were dissatisfied with the Regular Democratic ticket because they objected to the presence of former Republicans Cordill and Register and because it was approved only by the local party's executive committee rather than by the entire convention. Following the Democratic convention, Fairfax contacted moderate Democrat George Ralston, asking if he might join Black Republicans on a fusion ticket. Fairfax and other Republicans also made similar contacts with other dissatisfied Democrats, including J.S. Douglass and former sheriff Lucien Bland, who began to organize an opposition ticket.[17]

During the next few days, the leading white Democrats of the Parish contacted all the leading Black Republicans and warned them not to put up a ticket in the forthcoming elections. The Democrats usually arrived in pairs or threes, offering a more or less friendly warning during their first contact and threats of violence or even death on a later contact.[18]

On Saturday evening, October 12, Captain John Peck led a body of at least 25 armed men to Alfred Fairfax's house on the outskirts of

Waterproof. Peck was from neighboring Catahoula Parish, and the others were a mixed group from Catahoula and Tensas. Peck mounted the steps to the gallery, brushed aside the lady who had come to the door, and fired at Fairfax but missed him. Fairfax, who had been warned about a possible attack, was holding his shotgun but did not return fire because his weapon was loaded with buckshot that might have wounded the lady near the door. Instead, he escaped through the back door. Captain Peck entered the house and shot one of Fairfax's friends. George C. Goldman and Charlie Kemp also entered the house and wounded another man fatally. Some of the other assailants fired into the house from outside; one of these shots wounded a third friend of Fairfax. Another shot from outside accidentally hit Captain Peck, killing him instantly as he left the house. Seven witnesses testified to the foregoing version of events before the Senate Committee that investigated the 1878 elections.[19]

Nevertheless, Confederate veteran Isaac Harrison, a member of Peck's band, told a different story. According to an account written by his nephew in the 1930s, Harrison saw Peck mount the steps to Fairfax's front porch, where he was shot dead by fire from inside the house before he could even go inside. In any case, the group withdrew from their siege of Fairfax's house and took Peck's body to St. Joseph, spreading the claim that Fairfax had killed him.[20]

The following day, Judge Cordill sent this telegram to Governor Nicholls:

> J.S. Peck was murdered last night by Fairfax, colored candidate for Congress. He (Fairfax) is trying to excite the negroes to violence. The sheriff has a warrant and is making search for him.[21]

This news, unproven though it was, spread fast. Before dawn the following day, Democrat Thomas Prince Farrar and his son-in-law, Henry Richardson, visited Black Republican member of the State Legislature, J. Ross Stewart, who recounted their visit as follows:

> On Sunday morning at four o'clock, District Attorney Farrar and Mr. Richardson came to my house. I had a dog that was pretty bad; he barked and threatened them: I called him off. Richardson had a Winchester rifle. He said, "Stewart, don't let that dog bite

> me, I have got a gun, but I ain't going to use it to hurt you." They said they had come on a mission of peace; they said that Fairfax had been attacked, and was supposed to have been killed; that Captain Peck had been killed, and they didn't know how many others; and that the best thing I could do was to go to jail. I said, " Gentlemen, I was never in jail in my life; and as for protection, they had given to John Gair; they took him from the jail and killed him, and that is what they would do with me if I should go to jail. I have a wife and child here, and I don't mean to go anywhere, but to stay home; and if anybody comes here to kill me, I will try and see if I can't kill as many of them as they will of me." Well, they said every man in Saint Joseph has been summoned as a posse to protect Saint Joseph, and they may carry you out and kill you, and going to jail may protect you. I asked them who these men were. Mr. Farrar said they were Col. John S. Young's men and Gen. J. Floyd King's men from the back parishes.[22]

On the surface, Richardson and Farrar's suggestion appeared to be a friendly warning, but both visitors must have known that Stewart might not be any safer in the St. Joseph jail than he was at home. As Stewart pointed out, the jail didn't protect John Gair, who was a Black member of the State Assembly from East Feliciana Parish, killed by bulldozers in 1875. It seems more likely that they intervened at the request of Judge Cordill or L.V. Reeves, who had been Farrar's law partner and was President of the local Democratic Party's Executive Committee. General King and Colonel Young were officers in the State Militia and Democratic candidates for Congress from the Fifth Congressional District. Young was the candidate running against Alfred Fairfax for the remainder of the term of Republican John E. Leonard, who had died in office, and King was the candidate for the full term beginning in March 1879. General King would shortly make a personal appearance in the Parish.[23]

On Sunday, October 13, Sheriff John Register led a posse to arrest Fairfax, but they could not find him; Register was another former Republican who had recently turned Democrat. Judge Cordill also visited Waterproof that day with planter T.J. Watson. Watson later testified that, as they began their return trip to St. Joseph, they had seen 400 to 600 armed negroes alongside the road. Even if Watson exaggerated the numbers of men and arms on the outskirts of Waterproof, it was not

surprising that a large number of Blacks gathered near the scene of the crime against Fairfax, especially because of rumors that a band of whites had killed the Blacks who lived nearby on Bass's Myrtle Grove Plantation.[24]

On the following day, a large body of unarmed Black men gathered outside St. Joseph and asked to pass through the yellow fever quarantine to attend the Republican convention. Evidently, they had not received word that the convention had been moved to Miller Place, a site 11 miles from St. Joseph. Later, a group of about 20 armed Blacks gathered outside St. Joseph with the apparent intention of passing through the quarantine. Mr. H.F. Shaifer, who was in charge of the quarantine around St. Joseph, sent Henry Richardson out with T.C. Sachse to find out what the problem was. Henry apparently reasoned with them and decided that they posed no particular threat, especially since their arms were "inefficient."[25]

Despite the confusion caused by the changed convention site, the Black Republicans held their convention and voted to support the mixed ticket comprising mostly dissident white Democrats and a few Black Republicans; this ticket was known variously as the Independent ticket, the Country People's ticket, or the Bland-Douglas ticket after the two white leaders. The fugitive Alfred Fairfax appeared toward the end of the proceedings and fully endorsed the convention's decision before heading south, intending to have ballots printed in Vidalia. At that time, Fairfax was on the Independent ticket, opposing Democrat John S. Young for the remaining term of the Congressman who had died in office. Fairfax was not running for the full term, beginning the following March. Some delegates who could not make it to Miller Place assembled at Hard Bargain Place and approved the same ticket.[26]

All during that Monday, 500 to 600 Blacks were moving along the roads of Tensas to and from their convention. Normally, they moved in groups, and because of the attack on Fairfax, some of them were armed to protect themselves and to protect Fairfax. These movements quickly spread alarm throughout the small white community, awakening visions of a Haitian-style massacre where angry Black hordes would rise up and kill them all. Although Fairfax was in hiding the following day, he realized how explosive the situation had become and warned Blacks in his neighborhood not to go into Waterproof, and especially not to carry arms if they were obliged to go there.[27]

On Tuesday, October 15, Judge Cordill and Sheriff John Register led a large posse from St. Joseph toward Waterproof. The posse included about 25 men from Franklin Parish, and 25 men from St. Joseph. When they reached a group of dwellings near Bass Lane, there was an armed confrontation between the posse and a group of Blacks gathered there. It is difficult to determine what actually happened during this confrontation due to the conflicting evidence presented to the Senate Committee. In his testimony, T.J. Watson, who was close to Cordill, claimed that the Blacks fired 50 to 100 shots toward him and a companion, who were the posse's two-man advance guard. The two men were in no danger since they were out of range of the Blacks' shotguns, and they waited for the main body to catch up to them. Although the posse was only about 300 yards behind their advance guard, a witness from the main body, Mr. R. Loscey, did not hear the shots that the Blacks were said to have fired. When the posse reached Bass Lane, their chief ordered them to fire, and those in the front ranks fired at the Blacks assembled there. Watson first stated that there were about 600 Blacks in the group gathered in Bass Lane, but when pressed by the Senators, he admitted that he actually saw only about 100. Loscey, who arrived later, saw about a dozen. Nevertheless, rumors soon inflated the number of Blacks to as many as 1000. Another discrepancy appeared when Loscey testified that the posse had fired into Bass's quarters, where many Black workers lived, and Watson denied that they had. A third witness, Violetta Wallace, confirmed that she had heard bullets fired into her house in Bass's quarters, after which she panicked and ran to take refuge in Bass's house, where she and other Blacks found shelter during the pre-election troubles. Gus Bass may not have known about this since he was in St. Joseph during the election campaign. This encounter took place in the neighborhood where Judge Cordill and Watson had seen large groups of Blacks the previous Sunday evening. When the posse intervened, however, many Blacks had gone back to work picking cotton, which may explain why fewer were present than Cordill expected.[28]

While this raid was being prepared on October 15, *The Natchez Democrat and Courier* published a misleading letter from Wade R. Young under the headline, "Fairfax and his followers bold and defiant—They are in arms and threaten to sack the little town of Waterproof." Young was the representative of Concordia Parish on the Democratic Executive Committee of the Fifth Congressional District. On October 15 and 19, *The Natchez Democrat* published two other articles with distorted news of the

events in Tensas. This newspaper also circulated in Tensas Parish and must have amplified the anxiety that was mounting in the white community. From Natchez, a company of whites crossed over to help their white compatriots, but finding that all was quiet around Waterproof after the Bass Lane encounter, they turned around and went home.[29]

Governor Nicholls received this fake news at about the same time and became concerned about the lack of official reports from Tensas. He then sent off a telegraphic rebuke to Judge Cordill. Meanwhile, Chief State Engineer Benjamin M. Harrod learned that the Governor wanted information and sent the following telegram addressed to Major Henry Richardson and "Judge" Farrar, Henry's father-in-law:

> I understand Gov directs Adjutant Genl to have troops ready to proceed to Tensas to preserve peace if called for by authorities of Parish. Answer what is wanted, where landed and other details of trouble.[30]

Henry and his father-in-law must have consulted with Cordill before replying to this telegram, and their reply probably did not contradict the contents of the long letter that Cordill sent to the Governor on October 18. In that letter, Cordill repeated the allegation that Alfred Fairfax had killed Captain Peck and further alleged that large bodies of armed negroes had gathered in the Parish, "…threatening the lives and property of all white citizens." He went on to recount the confrontation at Bass Lane:

> We were fired upon by a group of armed negroes numbering between 300 and 400. We returned the fire, killing and wounding eight, and dispersing the remainder. On the first fire of the negroes, a gin-house on a plantation was fired and destroyed by the negroes, and I have since learned that the firing of the gin was a signal for the assembling of the negroes at that point.[31]

Cordill's estimate of 300 to 400 armed negroes confronting the posse at Bass Lane was not corroborated by any witnesses, white or Black, who appeared before the Senate committee. Neither was his claim of eight negroes killed during that engagement. Additionally, Dick Miller, the Black worker who took care of the gin house, was accused of setting

the fire and was summarily lynched. His wife later testified that he was at home when the fire broke out. Cordill summarized his accusations by claiming, "This deplorable state of affairs was brought about by the incendiary speeches of Fairfax and other negro leaders, who are alone responsible."[32]

Cordill also advised the Governor that, because of poor communication with New Orleans, he had taken the liberty of contacting General J. Floyd King of Concordia Parish, who commanded the State militia in the district, and had asked him for aid in keeping order. Support from nearby parishes had begun to arrive as early as October 12, when Captain Peck from Catahoula Parish led his men to Alfred Fairfax's house, and on October 15, when 25 men from neighboring Franklin Parish joined the posse that raided the Black neighborhood near Bass Lane. During the next two days, additional militia bands arrived from Ouachita, Morehouse, and Richland Parishes. From 300 to 500 well-armed men invaded the Parish, causing Black Republicans literally to "take to the woods." General King, who was also the Democratic candidate for Congress from the district, spent a few days in the Parish but never seemed to exercise much operational control over his troops.[33]

Nevertheless, the militia bands seemed to know what they were expected to do; they spent their time chasing down Blacks, administering threats and whippings, occasionally shooting those who tried to run away, and even lynching other recalcitrants. At times, the external militias cooperated with local law enforcement officers. Deputy Sheriff Kenny, who held warrants for the arrest of politically active Blacks, was reinforced by troopers from other parishes. At other times, external groups seemed to operate without any backing from Tensas Parish authorities, such as one band from Ouachita Parish that even had a list of prominent Blacks to be killed.[34]

On October 17, the Bland-Douglas Independent Democrats held their convention in Newellton despite aggressive opposition from Regular Democrats. "When we went to hold the convention we were notified that if we did hold a convention, we should never come out alive; we were notified of this by Mr. Farrar and others, with a number more of Democrats from St. Joseph." Judge Cordill and other Regular Democrats accused the Independents of arousing the colored people to rebellion. "The bulldozing had grown so great at this time that we had to take the colored men off the ticket and make an entirely white ticket." No Blacks were present at this meeting, but the Black Republicans had approved

the State and local candidates of the Independents at their convention on October 15. The Newellton convention ratified an all-white ticket that included General J. Floyd King and Colonel John S. Young for Congress, which meant that the Tensas campaign had become a contest only for local and State offices.[35]

Judge Cordill tried to recruit support from Black leaders by pretending that the parish election campaign was not connected with the bulldozing attacks of the out-of-parish troopers. In a conversation with Black leader William Coolidge, Cordill said,

> I would like to have you all with us. [J. Ross] Stewarts (sic) has let down, and there is nobody kicking now but you fellows up there; and, by God, them bulldozers have been here and will come again, and if you fellows come with us we will protect you. They said they were coming back Sunday week anyhow; but I told them we didn't want them anymore, and they said they were coming back to see how this election was coming off.[36]

A few minutes later, Cordill continued:

> By God, you have not got anything to gain in this fight. This is a white man's fight, and I want you negroes to keep out of it. If you all advocate the Bland and Douglas ticket, you have nothing else up in it but your corpses. You have heard of the destruction in Waterproof. If you don't believe me, you have all got your horses and buggies here, and you can go down and see for yourselves. The men are down there hanging up in the trees now.[37]

At his point, the election campaign centered on the presence of Charles C. Cordill on the Regular Democratic ticket. As Cordill confided to his former Republican associate J. Ross Stewart, "This is a fight between Douglas and me, and any man who gets in my way has got to fight."[38]

Cordill's anger against the Bland-Douglas Independents turned white-hot when Douglas distributed a written statement denigrating Cordill and Sheriff Register personally:

> Because we took issue with the executive committee's right to nominate a ticket for the people of this parish, a portion of which

> ticket was recruited from the Republican ranks; because we declined the off-casts of the Republican party, C.C. Cordill and John Register, to be our standard bearers, and refused to recognize them as Democrats deserving the support of the Democratic party for any office, we were denounced as having drawn the color line, and ready to lead the negroes against our friends and neighbors to murder their women and children, to burn, pillage, and destroy.… Our friends and acquaintances needed no refutation; they knew us to be incapable of these things, as we have always held the position of gentlemen and men of honor. Our fair name has been assailed by demagogues and slanderers, and we take this means to brand all such as have spread these reports as liars and scoundrels of the vilest order. We are accused and held responsible as being the cause of the late disturbance. We have been always in favor of peace and quiet, and we are prepared to prove our innocence in the matter and can saddle the blame where it justly rests.[39]

During the political campaign, Cordill continued to accuse the white Independent candidates of inciting the Black community to violence. By magnifying this danger, Cordill aroused an exaggerated white reaction, which gave him an excuse to issue warrants for the arrest of Black political leaders and to send out armed posses to surveil and intimidate the political opposition. Sheriff Register seemed to have carried on a campaign of intimidating the white opposition by sending his deputies to "observe" the political meetings that the Bland-Douglas Independents tried to organize.[40]

The militia from other parishes stayed in Tensas for at least two weeks. General King left before the end of the operation, and his second-in-command supervised the withdrawal. Most of the external militiamen had left before the election, but not before many of the Black Republican leaders had fled the parish or gone into hiding to escape warrants for their arrest and threats of death. Those Blacks who stayed behind were often persuaded to join Democratic clubs, which offered them protection as long as they voted the Democratic ticket.[41]

Election day was relatively quiet. The bulldozing during October caused many Blacks to stay away from the polls, but some were able to deposit ballots for the Independent ticket without being molested. At one polling place, however, Theodore C. Sachse kept a close watch to see

whether Black voters had placed the Regular Democratic ballot in the ballot box. The Independents lost the election by the count—not by the vote—which they probably won. Numerous witnesses at different polling stations claimed that their ballot boxes had been stuffed or that their votes were not counted, thus providing evidence that the Regular Democrats had won the Tensas Parish elections through fraud and intimidation.[42]

After the election, Charles C. Cordill found his position considerably strengthened in Tensas and surrounding parishes, as the local newspaper claimed in his obituary:

> In 1878 occurred the political revolution in Tensas, in which Judge Cordill was easily the leader, and the resultant establishment of white supremacy in the parish made him the acknowledged political leader in Tensas, which position he held without serious opposition until his voluntary retirement from political life in 1912.[43]

The 1878 election in Tensas also placed Cordill in the Louisiana House of Representatives, which was only the first step toward the important position he would soon occupy in statewide politics. Cordill and his friends laid the foundation for his political career by creating the myth that he had saved the Parish from a massive Black uprising through the raid that he and Sheriff Register led at Bass Lane on October 15, 1878.[44]

Black leader J. Ross Stewart was not mistaken in his belief that Cordill was "running this whole machine" in 1878. The Tensas machine, however, was only a part of a larger plan for a political revolution in Northeastern Louisiana developed by the Democrat party machine. Despite some initial hesitation to betray his former Black Republican associates, Cordill realized that the Democratic plan for revolution was well-conceived and that the Democrat machine's momentum had grown so strong that he could no longer do anything to slow it down. During his conversations with Fairfax in early October, Cordill declared that he was being coerced into leaving the Republicans and joining the Regular Democrats. For at least six years, Cordill had effectively led a coalition government of Blacks and whites in the Parish and had even forestalled a tentative to bulldoze the Black Republicans during the elections of 1876. Two years later, Captain John Peck of Catahoula Parish had

Cordill's Republican record in mind when he threatened Cordill and Register with death if they did not "get on the Lord's side." Since Cordill could not beat them, he joined them.[45]

Paramilitary groups from Catahoula Parish had been earning their reputation for bulldozing since 1873 when they joined their neighbors to the West in the campaign that led to the Colfax massacre. According to historian James K. Hogue, "They also threatened and expulsed Republican officeholders before the disputed 1874 election in their home parish." Hogue continued, "After their successful coup d'état in 1877, the White Leagues were absorbed into the state militia, assuming a new identity as the National Guard of Louisiana."[46]

Despite Captain Peck's incendiary role in the affair, he was no more than a messenger, and his militia was only one of the five units that had been placed in a state of readiness for the election campaign. Thus, when Cordill called on General King for help, militias from these five northeastern parishes were ready to stream into Tensas within one to three days. As J. Ross Stewart observed, "These men could not have got here by that time—could not have marched 80 or 100 miles—unless it was a preconcerted thing." There must have been some underlying political strategy that united the five "back parishes," that is, those parishes that were not situated directly on the Mississippi River.[47]

Since the 1876 elections, these back parishes were solidly Democrat. In 1876, party activists had to resort to bulldozing to achieve this result in some parishes—including Ouachita and Morehouse. In Ouachita Parish, leading Democrats—including future Governor Samuel D. McEnery—were said to have forced Blacks to sign affidavits stating that there had been no terrorism. The Black to white voter ratio was lower in the back parishes than in parishes on the Mississippi, which had made the task of back-parish Democrats easier. In fact, Republican voters, mostly Blacks, outnumbered Democrats in the riverside parishes by ratios close to 10 to 1, which meant that in the Congressional elections of 1876, they were able to outweigh the Democratic majorities in the back parishes and to elect a Republican Congressman, as well as to maintain Republican majorities in local circumscriptions.[48]

In 1878, since redemption had been achieved at the State level, Democrats in the Fifth Congressional District were expected to do better, and their Executive Committee directed and coordinated the efforts of Democrats toward that end in the District's parishes. A quick look at the Committee's membership clarifies its vital role in the 1878 elections. The

Committee Chairman was Samuel D. McEnery, who would become Lieutenant Governor in 1880 and Governor in 1881. More than coincidental is the identity of the Committee's representative for Tensas Parish, Theodore C. Sachse, who, as the testimony before the Senate Committee clearly shows, was one of the most radical and determined of all the Tensas redeemers. Sachse's role is surprising since he had served in the Union Army during the Civil War and might have been considered a carpetbagger. Sachse convinced Tensas politicians that the Fifth District Committee and back-parish Democrats were deadly serious about winning Tensas Parish in 1878. As early as September 30, it was Sachse who threatened J. Ross Stewart and George Griffith with death if they did not stop making political speeches. At that time, L.V. Reeves, President of the local Democratic Executive Committee, denied that this was the party line and seemed ready to continue cooperating with Black Republicans in local government. Nevertheless, within a week, Reeves had completely changed his tune and had come around to Sachse's point of view. Sachse was also useful in spreading fake news, such as his repeated claim that the Black Republicans had "drawn the color line" by nominating an all-Black ticket. The success of this line inspired Cordill to use similar tactics, repeatedly claiming that Fairfax and other Black leaders were inciting the Black community to rebellion.[49]

Thus, it is evident that the strategic plan for redemption in Tensas Parish was adopted and coordinated by the Democratic Executive Committee of the Fifth Congressional District and that ideologues like Sachse, who were committed to the doctrine of white supremacy, ensured that the plan was executed in the parishes of that district. As Democratic strategists were aware, an identical plan had been honed and polished by redeemers across the river in the Natchez District during the 1874 and 1876 elections. The elements of the plan were as follows:

- Convert white Republicans to the Democratic Party by persuasion and threats.
- Isolate Black Republican voters, thus rendering them more susceptible to violence and intimidation.
- Spread fake news among white voters in the target parish(es) not only to recruit voters but also to raise tolerance of voter intimidation and ballot box fraud.

- Mobilize white Democrats in the back parishes for armed intervention in those riverside parishes where Black voters were in the majority.[50]

Historian James K. Hogue confirms the close cooperation between the militia and the Democratic Party: "After their successful coup d'état in 1877, the White Leagues were absorbed into the state militia, assuming a new identity as the National Guard of Louisiana.… [P]aramilitaries in effect acted as the armed wing of the Conservative/Democratic party and were frequently one and the same."[51]

The Democrats' plan was a complete success in Tensas Parish as it had been in similar Mississippi counties. The same plan was a partial success in Concordia Parish, where a fusion regime (mixed Democrat and Republican) succeeded the previous Republican parish government. The Democrats appear to have concentrated their efforts on Tensas Parish; Concordia's representative on the Fifth Congressional District Committee, Wade R. Young, even helped spread fake news in Tensas. The Democrats of the Fifth Congressional District evidently considered that it was less urgent to redeem the northern riverside parishes, Madison and East Carroll, and these two parishes again voted Republican by large majorities in the 1878 elections. In any case, Cordill's success in Tensas proved that the Fifth District Democrats had chosen the right man to implement their plan and suggested that his influence would help complete redemption in the rest of the District.[52]

While the Senate Sub-Committee was hearing witnesses in New Orleans, a Federal Grand Jury was also hearing evidence that led them to indict the Democrats responsible for the election irregularities in Tensas Parish. The men eventually indicted were L.V. Reeves, Thomas P. Farrar, Wade R. Young, Charles C. Cordill, Theodore C. Sachse, Alexander Cohn, T. Quitman Munce, George C. Goldman, Henry Shaifer, John W. Register, John C. Henderson, Eli Tullis, and Charles Lee Kempe. This list includes practically all the leading men of the Regular Democratic Party in Tensas during the 1878 elections. A New Orleans jury acquitted all those indicted.[53]

Witnesses before the Senate Committee mentioned Henry Richardson's name twice: first, describing his friendly warning to Black politician J. Ross Stewart, and second, citing his service as a quarantine guard for St. Joseph. The second instance was a simple question of

community service, probably shared by other able-bodied citizens. His encounter with Stewart in company with his solidly Democratic father-in-law, however, suggests that they both supported the Regular Democratic ticket, although Henry was more reserved in his support because of his position as a State employee. Nevertheless, Henry must have understood what was happening in Tensas because he had seen white supremacists carry out similar operations in the Natchez District, where he was living during the 1876 election campaign. (See Chapter 9.)[54]

Given Charles Cordill's record of promoting levee construction in Tensas, Henry Richardson probably voted for him for State Assemblyman in 1878. During Cordill's long political career, he surely remembered Henry's support. In January 1879, Cordill took his seat in the State House of Representatives and was soon elected Chairman of the House Committee on Lands and Levees. In 1884, he was elected State Senator for Tensas and Concordia Parishes and became Chairman of the Senate Committee on Lands and Levees, a position he held until he retired in 1912. In 1886, the legislature created the Fifth Levee District that grouped the four northernmost riverside parishes, and Cordill served on the Board of that District, where he exercised "almost dictatorial power." Throughout these years, Henry Richardson would value his cordial, professional relationship with Charles C. Cordill.[55]

The results of the 1878 elections were celebrated in Tensas Parish and throughout the South, but the conduct of these elections in South Carolina and Louisiana was roundly denounced in the United States Senate report, released on February 27, 1879. After hearing 91 witnesses from the seven parishes where most irregularities had been reported, the Senators concluded that the 1878 Louisiana elections were rife with fraud, violence, and murder. The Report went on to note that freedom of speech had been restricted, that fears of negro rebellion were illusory, and that State and local authorities had made no effort to find or punish the guilty.[56]

Governor Francis R.T. Nicholls was much more cautious in pinpointing guilt and responsibility. After a visit to Tensas and other parishes where election violence had occurred, he addressed the legislature on the subject of law and order in the State, with special reference to Tensas and Concordia Parishes. In the interest of reducing political and racial tensions, he resorted to "both-sidesism," pointing to errors of the

whites and the Blacks. The initial fault was on the white side and political in nature:

> The visit of these men [Captain Peck's band] to Fairfax was utterly wrong, in my opinion, without justification, and, whilst attempted to be justified on the ground that they went in the interest of peace to expostulate against a rumored proposed attempt of the colored people to force the quarantine lines at the town of Saint Joseph. I am satisfied that such was not the purpose, but that it had a political object. I do not believe the purpose was to kill or harm Fairfax, but I do believe it was to influence his course and the local campaign in the parish. The killing of Peck and the wounding of the colored men was, in my opinion. totally unexpected and attended by results which none of the parties contemplated, and from which political considerations utterly disappeared.[57]

The Governor continued, stating that immediately after the killings at Fairfax's home, rumors began flying, and the conflict became racial rather than political. Soon, large groups of armed Blacks converging toward Waterproof led the outnumbered whites justifiably to call for outside help. Then violence spread when the Blacks assembled at Bass Lane allegedly fired at Judge Cordill's posse of 50 men who had come to restore order around Waterproof. At this juncture, Nicholls placed the blame for spreading and aggravating the violence solely on the Black community. Governor Nicholls did not contradict Cordill's version of events. Still, his attempt to place responsibility on whites as well as Blacks did not sit well with Cordill or Bourbon Democrats in the Fifth Congressional District.[58]

Political Maneuvers

Meanwhile, down in New Orleans, Governor Nicholls faced challenges to the New Departure program he had hoped to implement. Nicholls meant what he said when he accepted the nomination for Governor, and many of his supporters were unpleasantly surprised when he began to keep his promises. His resoluteness soon caused dissatisfaction and, ultimately, outright opposition from the two main factions in the State Democratic Party, the Bourbon planters and the New Orleans Ring,

along with the Louisiana Lottery Company. Nicholls represented the conservative or patrician faction of the Democratic Party that favored smaller government, lower taxes, and less Black participation in the political process. These objectives, however, were moderated by a certain idea of public service or noblesse oblige. Nicholls's race relations policy was to "show kindness and strict justice to the colored people." Nicholls even went so far as to appoint a few Blacks to minor positions, which infuriated the radical Bourbon wing of the party.[59]

The Bourbons, who drew their support primarily from planters and their followers in the cotton-growing parishes, believed in everything that other conservatives did, only more so. They favored even lower taxes, complete exclusion of Blacks from politics, and a reduction in public services, except for levee construction that benefited the resurgent planter aristocracy. The Bourbons asserted and maintained their political power through tactics akin to those used in the 1878 Tensas elections. Nicholls's denunciation of violence in those elections further distanced Bourbon politicians—such as Charles C. Cordill—who employed or endorsed such methods. The radical Bourbons soon became frustrated with Nicholls's relative moderation.[60]

The New Orleans Ring shared many of the sentiments and objectives of the Bourbons. However, their urban base led them to adopt a more structured organization like those in other American cities, such as New York's Tammany Hall. The Ring's support came from Democratic Clubs in each of the 17 wards of the city. Each club sent representatives to the Democratic Parish Committee, whose leaders were usually leaders of the Ring. This framework enabled the Democrats to wrest control of city government from the Republicans in 1872 when they elected Louis A. Wiltz as Mayor. Then only 29 years old, Wiltz had already served as a member of the Parish Democratic Committee, as a city Alderman, and as a member of the State legislature. When the Democrats convened in 1876 to choose their winning State ticket, Wiltz was a candidate for Governor, as were John McEnery and Francis T. Nicholls. Wiltz led the voting on the first two ballots but could not obtain a majority because the country delegates would not accept a candidate from the city. Nicholls—who had not even sought the nomination—took the lead on the next round, after which McEnery withdrew. Nicholls triumphed on the fourth ballot, and Wiltz moved to make the nomination unanimous. In recognition of this gesture and of the strong backing of his supporters, Wiltz was nominated for Lieutenant Governor.[61]

Another leader of the New Orleans Ring was Major Edward A. Burke, who owed his rise in State politics to his support for the White League's attempted coup d'état of September 14, 1874, to his success as manager of Nicholls's campaign for the Governorship, and to his role in negotiating the infamous Compromise of 1877 that sealed Nicholls's victory. In recognition of his services, Burke was elected State Treasurer in 1878 and remained in that position until 1888.[62]

> Major Burke must be considered separately as a power base of Bourbonism. As state treasurer, he wielded great power; he could decide whose warrants would be refused, thus forcing those refused to discount their warrants at a bank. He was editor-publisher of one of the most powerful newspapers in the South [*The Times-Democrat* of New Orleans]. Finally, he was at the center of the alliance of the Bourbon politicians, the New Orleans Ring, the lessees of state convicts, and the Lottery. He was without a doubt the most powerful man in the State from 1879 to 1888.[63]

Although the voters had rewarded the Ring's leaders, club members were disappointed to receive very little recognition from the Nicholls administration. As he had promised when accepting the nomination, the Governor was more interested in re-establishing the State finances than creating jobs for his supporters. But even if he had been more generous with the spoils of office, Nicholls could never have satisfied the hundreds of job seekers who applied. Wiltz's loyal supporters began to feel that Nicholls had not adequately compensated them for the role Wiltz had played in securing his election, and the Governor soon lost the support of the New Orleans Ring. Thus, a shared opposition to Governor Nicholls cemented an alliance of the Bourbons and the Ring, which effectively ruled the State for the next decade.[64]

Nicholls was also increasingly at odds with the State Lottery Company. The Louisiana State Lottery was created by gambling interests from New York, which in 1868 bribed the Republican legislature into granting them a monopolistic charter for 25 years in return for an annual payment of $40,000 to the State treasury. The Lottery sold tickets by mail throughout the United States, and by the mid-1870s, it had become the most successful enterprise of its kind in the country, taking in millions of dollars every year. The Lottery Company needed to maintain good relations with the State government to protect its charter.

When Governor Nicholls appeared to be winning the standoff against outgoing Governor Packard after the 1876 election, Lottery spokesmen approached Nicholls's counselors and offered to persuade certain State legislators to abandon Packard and support Nicholls. At least, that is how the transaction was presented to Governor Nicholls, along with the assurance that the Lottery attached no strings to their offer.[65]

According to a *New York Times* article written 17 years later, it was actually Lieutenant Governor Louis A. Wiltz who took the initiative. This version alleged that Wiltz went to Lottery President Charles Howard and asked him to advance the funds necessary to reimburse the legislators for the losses they might incur by switching allegiances. Howard responded favorably, and the Lottery delivered $65,000 in small denominations to the Nicholls legislature after Wiltz had signed a statement describing the nature of the transaction.[66]

State Treasurer Edward A. Burke also benefited from the Lottery's largesse when he became the editor and later the sole owner of the New Orleans Democrat. During the early months of 1879, *The Democrat* had been running a series of strident articles denouncing the Lottery, but this campaign ceased immediately after a group, including Burke and President Howard of the Lottery, bought the newspaper in April 1879.[67]

Although Governor Nicholls opposed state-supported gambling on moral grounds, he took no action against the Lottery Company during his first term in office. However, several legislators independently introduced bills to cancel the Lottery's charter, and one of these eventually passed both houses. After considerable hesitation, Governor Nicholls signed the bill, branding himself as an adversary of the Lottery. Nevertheless, Lottery President Howard secured a court restraining order allowing the Lottery to continue until the new State constitution renewed its charter for 25 years.[68]

Governor Nicholls's opponents soon found an opportunity to ease him out of office. Once the Redeemers had come to power, they saw no reason why they should continue to run the State under the Reconstruction era Constitution of 1868, and they called for a new Constitutional Convention in 1878. Nicholls's opponents then inserted a provision in the new Constitution for earlier State elections. It was certainly not a coincidence that Louis A. Wiltz, who presided over the Constitutional Convention, also became the next Democratic nominee for Governor. Wiltz was elected in 1878, but soon afterward, his health began to decline. He was obliged to take a leave of absence in 1880, thus

leaving Lieutenant Governor Samuel D. McEnery as Acting Governor. McEnery, who was one of the leading Bourbons, succeeded Wiltz as Governor after the latter's death on October 16, 1881, and was elected to a full four-year term in 1884.[69]

The Louisiana Bourbons used a clever system of fraud to leverage their relatively small numbers to hold power in the State. After 1877, the Republican Party had no chance of governing the State for many years. Therefore, nomination by State Democratic Conventions was tantamount to election. The size of the delegation that each parish could send to a Convention depended on the size of the Democratic vote in the previous election. In each parish where the Bourbons were strongest, there was a relatively small population of white planters and their hangers-on, surrounded by a majority of Black voters. The 1878 elections in Tensas and similar parishes laid the foundation of the system for future campaigns. Thereafter, intimidation, manipulation, and outright fraud enabled the white planter minorities to control the Black as well as the white vote for nearly 20 years. The result was a massive Democratic vote in each election. For example, in the Fifth Congressional District in northeastern Louisiana, the four Mississippi riverside parishes, which counted only 11.3% of the adult white males of the District, were able to send 75 delegates to the nominating convention of 1888. The other 11 parishes of the District, however, were allowed only 79 delegates since they had been less effective in getting out the Democratic vote in the previous election. In this way, the Bourbons were able to wield disproportionate power in District and statewide Democratic Conventions.[70]

Alfred Fairfax and the Exodusters

On October 19, 1878, the Reverend Alfred Fairfax and his wife, Sarah, fled Tensas Parish on the steamboat *Robert E. Lee* and took refuge in New Orleans. Fairfax's life was in danger as long as he stayed in Tensas. He escaped by dressing in women's clothing to avoid recognition as he waited for the boat at Bass's landing. Once they had arrived in New Orleans, Reverend and Mrs. Fairfax no doubt found shelter through friends or church associates in the Black community. Fairfax was well-known there because he had served for two years as Assistant Appraiser for the Port of New Orleans and had become one of the leading ministers in the colored Baptist Church of Louisiana.[71]

Until public excitement over the election had passed, Fairfax's best chance to avoid arrest and prosecution—or even lynching—was to stay out of sight in New Orleans, where he had a support network. Such support was especially necessary because his wife was one of nearly 24,000 persons stricken by yellow fever in New Orleans during the epidemic of 1878. Fairfax wrote to President Hayes in December, detailing the bulldozing in Tensas and listing the names of 13 Blacks killed by the bulldozers. He also appeared before the Senate Committee on Election Violence. Although he didn't testify in New Orleans during the January hearings, he traveled to Washington, D.C., where he gave testimony in February. After returning to New Orleans, Fairfax was among the many refugees who gathered there from October 1878 through April 1879 and beyond. Many of these individuals were not refugees when they arrived in New Orleans; instead, they were witnesses before the Grand Jury that indicted dozens of alleged perpetrators of election violence in parishes like Tensas. After testifying against bulldozers and murderers in their home parishes, these witnesses became refugees since returning to their homes and families would have put their lives in danger.[72]

It was probably during his stay in New Orleans that Fairfax developed an active interest in Black emigration from the deep South. He was surely aware of the revived projects for Liberia that some Black activists were promoting and the Black colonies that promoters had already established in Kansas. By March 1879, when Blacks by the hundreds began leaving the Natchez District, no responsible Black leader could ignore the spontaneous surge of emigration to Kansas. Indeed, that was the subject of the New Orleans Colored Convention that began on April 17, 1879. About 200 persons attended those meetings, and at least one-third were clergymen. Since Alfred Fairfax was prominent in the State Baptist organization, he was probably present at the meetings, although he was not one of the main speakers. Despite the opposition of Black politicians such as P.B.S. Pinchback and others linked with the establishment, the Convention adopted a declaration addressed to the Black people of the State in favor of orderly emigration:[73]

> To go to Kansas and live there successfully, it is necessary to emigrate by colonies, under the direction and control of head men who shall spy out the land, locate the settlements, determine the cost, and then arrange the migration. This practical course

> commends it from its suggestions to the most limited understanding, which we strongly urge on our people. Meanwhile, pending the formation of colonies and the securement of advantages which to those who seek Kansas that State presents, we advise an abandonment by the colored people therein of all the turbulent, bulldozed parishes in this State. Then all sections yet remaining in Louisiana, mainly within the sugar-growing parishes of the State, where life and personal liberty are comparatively secure, and where labor commands fair pay and good guarantees are given.[74]

After reading the declaration, the speaker added "that it was inexpedient and unnecessary to make a general movement till the provocation comes." He advised that the colored people be prepared to move when the occasion comes, and leave the white people to cultivate their own cotton and sugar.[75]

The Convention's declaration was designed to discourage the imprudent flight of unprepared Exodusters then underway and to encourage dissatisfied Blacks to prepare themselves in advance for emigration as a means of escaping unjust treatment in Louisiana. An additional but undeclared objective of the Colored Convention was to influence delegates to another assembly—the State Constitutional Convention—that began just as the Colored Convention adjourned. Indeed, many in the Black population feared that the new Constitution would drag them even further back toward slavery, and some in the planter aristocracy realized that this fear was one reason so many Blacks were leaving.

Some planters had already taken measures to reassure the Black community. For example, on March 6, 1879, in Tensas Parish, "a large number of citizens" met to organize a new biracial Peoples' Party comprising moderate white Democrats and Black Republicans. The party's Committee on resolutions proposed a platform that began, "Whereas, It is the opinion of this meeting that a political crisis has arrived in the Parish of Tensas, which renders it necessary to form a new party…, [W]e consider it to be for the prosperity of both white and colored people that such a party should be formed." The party platform included the following points: "We are opposed to any attempt to tamper with the right of suffrage…[and] we are in favor of an impartial distribution of the school funds for the education of both white and colored children." Subsequently, in the March 18 election of delegates to

the Constitutional Convention, a Fusion ticket comprising Republicans and moderate Democratic candidates prevailed by large margins, which suggests that Blacks were not afraid to vote and that—contrary to the precedent of 1878—the Conservative Democrats did not resort to fraud and coercion to carry the election.[76]

None of these developments, however, could dissuade the hundreds of "Exodusters" who were massing along the Mississippi and waiting for steamboats that passed them by more often than not. The emigrants seemed to be spontaneously infused—as if by the Holy Spirit—with the conviction that they were reliving the biblical flight from Egypt. As the Exodus continued, an editorial in Tensas Parish's weekly newspaper shows just how worried the Tensas planters were:

> When the negro feels that he will be protected in his rights of person and property under the law, and that the people of this Parish who are the ruling class, representing the wealth, intelligence and power, will see them as protected, they will be contented.… Let a public meeting be at once called, and let all be invited to attend, and after discussing the situation, let the men to whom the colored people look for protection, pledge to them that they will see them protected. This is no time for cavilling (sic) and sentiment. The agricultural interests of the Parish demand that some step be taken to arrest the threatened evil, and we ought to let no means untried to avert it.[77]

Unfortunately, no such unified effort ever took place. When the Police Jury met on April 19, it did at least name a biracial delegation—seven Blacks and seven whites—to the regional Labor Convention scheduled for May 5, 1879, in Vicksburg.[78]

When Alfred Fairfax returned to Tensas in the spring of 1879, he was still subject to a warrant for his arrest in the Parish. The rapidity with which Fairfax's former persecutors reconciled themselves to his presence, however, suggests that Fairfax's safe return had been prepared in advance. On April 22, the day after stepping off the boat, Fairfax met with Parish Judge Bondurant and posted a $1,000 bond to guarantee his presence at a possible trial for the alleged murder of Captain John Peck. After that, he was free to come and go in Tensas until the trial. Since any aggression against Fairfax would only exacerbate the flight of the Parish's labor force, the Democrats who had seized power in Tensas now

felt obliged at least to tolerate the presence of the man they had forced to flee only six months before. Indeed, some of the moderate Democrats might have welcomed Fairfax's return. During the October election campaign, the Democratic machine had claimed that he was inciting the Black community to violence. Still, moderate members of the Police Jury (the Police Jury in Louisiana is equivalent to the County Board of Supervisors in most other States), such as Gus Bass and James Gillespie, recognized that Fairfax was a responsible leader who could "talk sense" to the Exodusters.[79]

The local newspaper never reported what Fairfax said at the Newellton meeting, but his message was surely in accord with the resolutions of the New Orleans Colored Convention, which had adjourned only two days before. Fairfax's position on emigration is probably best summarized in the resolution that the State Colored Baptist Convention in New Orleans approved on July 11, 1879, especially since Fairfax presided over that Convention:

> Resolved, That it is the sense of this Convention that it is our duty to encourage the migration of our people, provided, they are competent to pay their way and to support themselves for one year at their new homes.
>
> Be it further resolved, That we appoint a committee of five, who shall be known as the Committee on Emigration, whose duty shall be to give information to such as may desire to leave, and to send all documents and papers that may come into their possession relative to Kansas or other States of which information is desired.
>
> Be it further resolved, That we recommend that the officers and pastors of churches make arrangements to leave the State with their congregations or such other persons who may be prepared to go.[80]

Despite Fairfax's prestige in the Black community and his charisma, he could not restrain the many Exodusters who were determined to leave Tensas Parish immediately. From the last days of February 1879 until the end of May, hundreds streamed from near and far and camped by the riverside while they attempted to flag down northbound steamboats. Fairfax was not the only leader frustrated in his efforts to stem the tide, as Black preachers throughout the cotton-growing parishes of

Louisiana and counties of Mississippi found they had completely lost their influence. Certain cotton planters even reduced rents and offered more liberal terms to sharecroppers. Others resorted to harassment and violence, but neither tactic had much effect in slowing the departures. Would-be emigrants did not give up until they had no more food, money, or possessions they could sell. If these Exodusters were inspired by the biblical flight from Egypt, they had perhaps forgotten how long the Israelites had wandered before settling in the promised land.[81]

Historians have found it challenging to estimate how many Blacks emigrated from the deep South to Kansas. Census figures show that the Black population of Kansas increased by 26,000 during the 1870s. In 1879, as many as 20,000 Black emigrants probably reached Kansas, of whom roughly 15,000 were still there in the spring of 1880. After that, Black immigration continued at a moderate pace into 1881. Those who arrived in Kansas after May 1879 were mainly immigrants who had planned and organized their departure and possessed some cash or other resources.[82]

The heaviest flow of Black immigrants—approximately 4,000 who remained in Kansas—occurred from March to May 1879. Intermediate points, primarily St. Louis, Missouri, and Wyandotte, Kansas, were overwhelmed by the influx of impoverished Blacks. The city governments offered little assistance, and the local Black communities initially provided what charitable aid they could. Congress, then controlled by Democrats, could not provide aid due to Southern opposition. In these circumstances, up to 5% of those who immigrated during the winter and spring likely died from exposure and illness. The Governor of Kansas, John St. John, a Republican and a Quaker, was sympathetic to the plight of the immigrants. Although he candidly warned immigrants that the State could not officially provide land or other resources, he encouraged prominent citizens to contribute charitable aid. The Kansas Freedmen's Relief Association, Inc. (KFRA) was established in May 1879 in Topeka, with branches in Parsons, Fort Scott, and Independence. The KFRA's resources grew quickly thanks to private contributions from sources across the northern states. The Association primarily disbursed funds toward organizing and subsidizing agricultural colonies or suburban settlements.[83]

> After initially declaring that Kansas "will do her whole duty," he [Governor St. John] began to backtrack almost immediately and

> "was in full retreat" by the end of 1879. There was no room for any more blacks, he warned, and some of those who had already arrived in the state "must be got rid of." Too late the one-time presidential hopeful realized that "his venture into black philanthropy was not one that promised very big returns…." The voters illustrated that point by returning him to private life in the election of 1882.[84]

After the Colored Baptist Convention in July 1879, Alfred Fairfax may have visited Kansas to prepare for the colony that he later established in the southeastern part of the State. At the end of August, however, he was in Tensas Parish, staying at or near his former residence on the outskirts of Waterproof. He was likely recruiting colonists from among those Blacks who had sufficient resources to support themselves while getting settled in Kansas. He might also have attempted to sell the property he owned near Waterproof. His priority, however, was to clear his name and reputation from the charge of murder that his assailants had filed against him in October 1878.[85]

Fairfax might have supposed that charges against him would be dropped in November 1879 when the Parish Grand Jury decided that,

> After diligent inquiry into and investigation of all crimes committed in the parish since the last term of your Honorable Court, we arrive at the conclusion that law and order prevails, and that justice has not suffered from the fact that such a length of time has elapsed since the last session of the said Court, While we deprecate and deplore the disturbances which occurred in the parish during October 1878, we do not think it advisable, nor for the general good, to take any action in the matter; being convinced that any agitation of the same would be productive of no good whatsoever.[86]

This statement was obviously an excuse for not prosecuting the bulldozers responsible for those disturbances. The District Attorney, however, did not drop the charges against Alfred Fairfax for the murder of Captain Peck. In 1882, Fairfax returned to Tensas Parish to face trial, and the District Court acquitted him of all charges.[87]

In preparation for the State elections on December 2, 1879, the Republican Party of Tensas nominated Alfred Fairfax for the State

Senate. He declined the nomination, however, stating that he had been appointed a missionary and that his work in that capacity precluded his running for political office. It was just as well that Fairfax did not run because the results provided at least circumstantial evidence that Democratic Conservatives had again resorted to fraud and intimidation. Despite the strong opposition of Black voters who outnumbered white voters by ten to one, Tensas Parish voted to approve the new Constitution by 2011 votes to 4. Democratic candidates for State offices all led the voting by similar margins. A group led by James M. Gillespie, the white President of the Executive Committee of the opposition Peoples' Party, seized the ballot box in the First Ward (St. Joseph) in an apparent attempt to forestall tampering with results. This intervention proved fruitless, however, as the First Ward results were invalidated by the Election Commissioners, among whom was a young lawyer named B.T. McEnery, who had recently moved to the Parish from Monroe, the seat of the Fifth District Democratic Party headquarters of Samuel D. McEnery. In any case, the cotton crop had been harvested, ginned, and baled by the end of November. The planters of northeastern Louisiana no longer had any immediate reason to conciliate their Black labor force or to respect their right to vote.[88]

If Alfred Fairfax stayed long enough to vote in the election of 1879, he confirmed his belief that Bourbon political and economic control left little room for Blacks to improve their lives in Tensas Parish. Late in 1879, he left the Parish and took several families to Chautauqua County, Kansas, where he established the Little Caney colony for Black settlers.[89]

Chief State Engineer

On or before June 3, 1880, Henry Brown Richardson declined Acting Governor Samuel D. McEnery's offer to appoint him Chief State Engineer of Louisiana. Or so it seems. Chief Engineer Thomas S. Hardee had died on Friday, May 21, 1880, after a long illness, and McEnery offered Henry the job on Monday, May 24. Henry then asked for ten days to consider the offer, and exactly 11 days later, on June 4, McEnery appointed Benjamin H. Green as Chief State Engineer. But when Green resigned sometime in August to accept a more attractive offer from the New Orleans Pacific Railroad, McEnery finally persuaded Henry to take the job of Chief State Engineer, effective September 6, 1880.[90]

Henry had several good reasons to decline McEnery's first offer. Given his experience in railroad construction, he, too, might have been a candidate for the position with the New Orleans Pacific Railroad that was offered to Benjamin Green. The health of Henry's father-in-law also gave him reason to hesitate. Thomas Prince Farrar's death on September 1, 1880, suggests that his health was already failing in the spring, and Henry would not have wished to uproot Nannie and the children from St. Joseph when the future of their family was so uncertain. There was also the higher cost of living Henry's family would face in New Orleans; although the promotion would bring a higher salary, his $3000 per year as Assistant State Engineer would go farther in St. Joseph than $3600 as Chief State Engineer in New Orleans. Finally, since McEnery was then only Acting Governor during Governor Wirtz's illness, he might not have been able to assure Henry of the executive support he would need to carry out an effective levee construction policy.[91]

When McEnery made his second offer in August 1880, he was surely able to provide Henry with more solid assurances. Indeed, McEnery probably deemed it urgent to find a new Chief Engineer as soon as possible to ensure that the necessary levee construction and maintenance would be completed before spring high water. Given former Chief Engineer Hardee's illness, his death in May, and his successor's short time in office, it was quite possible that important engineering work was falling behind schedule. Before accepting this new offer, however, Henry undertook to assure himself and the Acting Governor that he could handle the job with the limited resources likely to be at his disposal. To this effect, he set out in mid-August with three members of his senior staff to determine the actual condition of the Mississippi levees and to identify the urgent work needed before the next high-water season.[92]

When Henry assumed his new duties in 1880, his offices were in the State House, which was then the former St. Louis Hotel. Henry may have commuted between St. Joseph and New Orleans during his first year as Chief Engineer; the City Directory showed no New Orleans residence in his name until 1882. The following year, most of the State government had moved to the new capital at Baton Rouge, but the State Board of Engineers remained in New Orleans throughout Henry's tenure. By 1885, the Board had moved to new quarters in the Cotton Exchange Building on Carondelet Street.[93]

The legislature had formalized the engineering functions of the State through Act No. 33, of February 10, 1879, which governed the Board of State Engineers. The duties of the Board were:

- To make surveys of watercourses, public works, and levees of the State; to "report to the Governor of the State the improvements necessary and the levees to be constructed, which are of prime importance to the State at large."
- To furnish the Governor with estimates and specifications of the work required.
- To furnish the police juries of parishes where surveys have been made with estimates and specifications of the work required, and to make surveys and perform other services that the police juries may require.
- To furnish the Levee District Commissions with estimates of the work required in their districts, and the amount of the general engineer fund available for the work in their districts.
- To examine and measure the work recommended by the Board and done under contracts made by the State;
- And to certify the amounts of payments due for work thus executed.
- To keep the records and archives of the State Engineer Department.[94]

Act No. 33 also increased the number of levee districts from five to six and redefined their boundaries. At that time, the boards were mainly responsible for levying levee taxes, but they would later be given greater powers and responsibilities.[95]

Louisiana benefited from favorable flood conditions during Henry's first two years as Chief Engineer, and this relative calm gave him time to learn the ropes of the State government. Still, he was well aware that much urgent work was needed to strengthen the levee system against the higher flood levels that were sure to menace the State in the years to come. Unfortunately, there was little he could do within the financial straitjacket imposed by the Constitution of 1879. As a safeguard against the supposed extravagances of the Reconstruction era, the delegates to the 1879 constitutional convention had written strict limits on taxation directly into the new Constitution. Article 213 called for maintaining a levee system and collecting a general levee tax to build and repair

levees. Article 214 authorized the General Assembly to form levee districts empowered to levy local taxes for the erection and maintenance of levees. The same Constitution, however, limited the general levee tax to one per mill of assessed valuation and limited the district levee taxes to five per mill of assessed valuation in each district. As the Board of Engineers pointed out in their reports for 1882 and 1884, under these limitations, even the theoretical maximum tax would have fallen far short of what was necessary to fund essential levee work. But despite the State Board's best efforts at persuasion, some of the District Commissioners kept the local tax levies below the maximum until the record flood levels of 1882.[96]

The State had adopted the prudent policy of limiting the total value of outstanding levee contracts to an amount that would not exceed expected tax collections. Still, by November 1881, tax delinquencies proved greater than forecast, and Chief Engineer Richardson reported to the Governor that the State might have to draw on expected revenues for 1882 in order to cover levee construction required before the next high water season. Richardson suggested an increase in the abnormally low assessed valuation of property in the State, which was obviously a political problem outside his area of responsibility. The shortage of funds was not the only problem the State Engineers faced. In February 1881, as the spring flood waters approached, Chief Engineer Richardson complained to newspaper reporters that the condition of the levees had been undermined by the failure of the parish authorities to fulfill their legal obligation to maintain, repair, and protect the levees in their parishes. Still, the high waters passed with little flooding. In the autumn of 1881, levee construction and repair were delayed due to labor shortages. Still, as spring drew near in 1882, Richardson believed the levees were in as good condition as they had been the previous year.[97]

The Great Mardi Gras Flood of 1882

Even as the flood waters converged on the State's northern borders, the subjects of Rex, king of the Mardi Gras, were so absorbed in the festivities that they could think of little but the pleasures of the Carnival. Indeed, "Pleasure" was the central theme of the parade's 55 floats that set off at noon on Mardi Gras, February 21, 1882. The royal court led the way with Rex, the King of Pleasure, costumed as pleasure-seeking King Henri III of France. Rex, accompanied by Comus and Momus, was

enthroned on a giant fish that was only the first of 22 floats depicting various pleasures of life in Louisiana. The Phunny Phorty Phellows followed with 17 floats evoking holiday pleasures. Fans of the parade's traditional political satire had to wait for the end of the procession, where the Independent Order of the Moon gently lampooned the foibles of the city government.[98]

This good-natured mockery was a far cry from the savage ridicule that the Knights of Momus, the Greek god of mockery and satire, had heaped on Republican politicians in 1877. The satirists of 1882 treated the city administration gently. This decision was fortunate because the Rex Carnaval Krewe, in a historic first, had chosen reformist Mayor Joseph A. Shakspeare as the King of Misrule. That royal epithet, however, was never applied to Shakspeare's civic administration because Rex was apparently able to keep his true identity a secret for the rest of his term as Mayor. Rex won popular acclaim when he halted his parade long enough to send salutations and a large floral bouquet to the Mardi Gras Queen, who had appeared on a balcony overlooking Canal Street. Her Majesty was Frances Isabel Morris, the debutante daughter of John A. Morris, the principal shareholder of the Louisiana Lottery Company. That evening, the Royal couple and their retinue dined at the Morris mansion and then went to the Exhibition Hall to preside over the Ball in their honor. Just before midnight, they left to pay their traditional visit to Comus, the god of festivity, whose guests were also having a ball at the French Opera House.[99]

The selection of Belle Morris as Queen was neither the first nor the last time the members of the Rex Krewe honored the Louisiana Lottery shareholders: Charles T. Howard, the Company's President, had served as Rex in 1877, his daughter would be Queen in 1884, and two of his sons would succeed him as Rex in 1888 and 1895. Such elaborate Mardi Gras spectacles were costly to produce even in 1882, and the Lottery was an obvious source of financing in the days before mass tourism made the Carnaval a profitable investment for the entire business community.[100]

"Certainly the Mississippi valley should be in a Lenten mood today." On February 22, which was Ash Wednesday, *The Times-Democrat* signaled an abrupt transition from the previous day's festivities:

> The premature floods of December and early January did not subside, but … furnished a dangerous and … fatal basis for the freshets of the following month.… It is a time particularly appro-

> priate for sorrow and humiliation. Surrounded by sullen, angry water; their fields flooded; their livestock drowned or starving; their prospects gloomy and dispiriting beyond description, the hapless dwellers in the alluvial belt, from Cairo eight hundred miles southward have little or nothing to do save to pass in review the melancholy panorama of their fate.[101]

For riverside parishes, Lenten fasting and sacrifice would be less a mark of devotion than an unavoidable disaster that continued even unto Easter Sunday, April 9, 1882, when the inundations had still not receded.

The early flood waters of December had filled the riverbed, and successive flood crests in January and February exerted ever greater pressure against the levees as the water rose. Unusually heavy rains bordering the Mississippi and its tributaries had led to inundations all along the Mississippi from Cairo, Illinois, southward. On the eve of Mardi Gras, riverside planters—and especially their Black laborers—from Memphis to Vicksburg had already been battling the floods for three weeks. Despite their heroic efforts, floodwaters had overwhelmed levees in Tennessee, Arkansas, and northern Mississippi, spreading the river to a width of 30 miles.[102]

In Louisiana, the levees held reasonably well until mid-March. Crevasses appeared below New Orleans as early as January 28, and another early break was reported at Delta in the North. Still, even the week before Mardi Gras, Chief State Engineer Henry Richardson was optimistic about the extent of possible damages as he returned from an inspection trip upriver. Perhaps Henry did not wish to spread panic among the population on the eve of New Orleans's most quintessential festivities, but he must have been aware of the threats that more than two months of high water had brought to the levee system.[103]

> The most dangerous floods are those that contain several flood crests. The first crest fills the storage capacity of the river, causing later ones to rise higher than they otherwise would …. The longer the river lies against the levee, the more saturated and weaker the levee becomes, and the more likely part of it will slough off. Such a slide increases the chance that the tremendous weight of the river can push it aside.… The river had leaned against the levees for weeks now, in many places for months, saturating them, pressing against them. Seepage was seen the entire length of the

> system. Dozens of tributaries, small and large, east and west—the Tennessee, the Cumberland, the Yazoo, the Ohio in the east; the Arkansas, the White, the St. Francis, the Canadian, the Missouri in the west; and a hundred others—had burst onto the land.[104]

Overwhelmed by record-high waters, Henry and his two assistants could do little to deal with the situation at the peak of the flooding. Although the Board of State Engineers was responsible for building and replacing levees, the local riverside parishes handled their maintenance and repairs. In practice, it was also up to the local authorities to pile sandbags on the levees when high waters risked overtopping them. As the torrent advanced, the State Engineers encouraged local efforts to save what could be saved and advised them where urgent action was needed. Parish authorities made frequent appeals for supplies of lumber and sacks, and the Engineers responded as best they could.[105]

To support and encourage Parish authorities and to keep the Governor and relief agencies informed, Henry Richardson made several trips up and down the river during February, March, and April 1882. He had already completed one inspection tour the week before Mardi Gras and began another on February 28. Before he left New Orleans, he had written to the President of the Jefferson Parish Police Jury, warning him that certain levees above the Carrollton suburb of New Orleans were weak and vulnerable to the rising waters. If these levees should give way, a good part of northeastern New Orleans would also risk inundation; Assistant Engineer Sidney Lewis followed Parish repair efforts and managed the office during Henry's absence.[106]

When Henry returned to New Orleans, he sent his assistants out to inspect their areas of responsibility. They reported that most levees were holding well and that riverside residents were working to repair and maintain them. Most of the levees held until mid-March when there were numerous breaks, especially in Tensas Parish. Planters worried that laborers would not work if they received government rations, but those fears proved unfounded. "All along the river,… [Board Secretary Frank] Kerr saw people at work on the levees, …and the people had everywhere turned out to meet the danger threatened." Assistant Engineer H.C. Brown estimated that 10,000 men were working to reinforce the levees between Bayou Sara and New Orleans. Needless to say, the men doing the work were Black, and their supervisors were white.[107]

Historian John M. Barry has vividly described the exhausting work of emergency levee repair during the 1927 flood, which hadn't changed much since 1882:

> Black men raised the levee. Where waves were eroding the crown, they built mud boxes, a wall of planks several feet high buttressed with sandbags, or sometimes simply stacked sandbags, laying them carefully like bricks. Each weak spot required thousands of sandbags, each one filled by hand, carried by hand, placed by hand. To fill a sandbag, two men held it, a third shoveled earth into it, then tied it. Dry, each filled sandbag weighed from 60 to 80 pounds; wet earth weighed much more. Bending over to fill one quickly became backbreaking. Carrying them up the long slope of the levee wore men down quickly.
>
> [A] white foreman, recalled: "They had a bunch of niggers over there … beating them with a stick and holding a pistol on them and couldn't get nothing done…. They asked me if I wanted a pistol and a stick. I told them no. I knew all those niggers…. I divided them up in groups, made one bunch fill the sacks, one bunch cull them, and one bunch lay them on. And I got them singing and working, and in about a day's time I had that levee sacked."
>
> Day after day, hour after hour, they filled sandbags, carried them up the slope of the levee, stacked them; the wet earth made the sandbags heavier than normal, over 100 pounds.[108]

Workers could not repair even small breaks without a supply of lumber and sacks at the ready, and those materials were often lacking. If a small break was not filled, it could rapidly become a crevasse growing to a width of hundreds or even thousands of feet. Once a crevasse opened, any effort to close it before the flood waters receded was usually doomed to failure.[109]

The 1882 flood covered 34,000 square miles along the Mississippi and its tributaries to an average depth of 6.5 feet. This was more than the combined area of New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. In Louisiana alone, 200,000 acres were flooded. Tensas was one of the Parishes that suffered the most. Four or five important levees in Tensas were reported broken by March 13. At

the same time, the Parish was flooded from the rear by overflow from the Tensas River and the Bayou Macon.[110]

Police Jury President Charles C. Cordill proclaimed during the peak of the flooding:

> I have just traveled 27 miles over the highest portions of this parish in a boat. On nearly every plantation the negroes have been driven from their houses and have taken refuge in the upper portions of the gins.… There is not 1000 acres of land out of water in the whole parish. Now, if anyone in authority in Louisiana will take the trouble he will find this flood to be the most distressing and appalling calamity that has ever befallen this section of the State.[111]

The widespread flooding brought risks of hardship, hunger, and even starvation in the northeastern parishes. On February 23, before the high waters even reached Louisiana, Congress passed a joint resolution to authorize the Secretary of War to distribute $100,000 in relief to those stricken by floods along the Mississippi River and its tributaries. To manage the distribution of rations, Governor McEnery appointed an ad hoc Overflow Commission with offices in New Orleans. Despite the evident destitution of the poor, certain planters along the riverside believed that workers would not work if the government fed them and urged that rations be given only to those who worked on the levees. It soon became clear, however, that there was no lack of workers along the levees and that the working men and their families were suffering as much from the floods, if not more, than the planters.[112]

On March 22, 1882, Governor McEnery called a meeting of government and business leaders at the St. Charles Hotel to organize the collection and distribution of relief for those left destitute by the floods. The Governor opened the meeting and turned the chair over to Overflow Commissioner Colonel Louis Bush, who asked State Treasurer Edward Burke to act as secretary of the meeting. Colonel Bush then advised the meeting that the Federal government had issued 321,000 rations of bread and meat to the State, of which 216,000 had been distributed as rations for 21,000 people for 15 days. Since then, the Secretary of War had approved 300,000 additional rations, but the Commissioners believed this would not be enough. Contributions from the public would be needed, but the Governor wished to solicit contributions from

within Louisiana before calling on other States, and those present agreed.[113]

Colonel Bush stressed that no provision had been made for feeding livestock, including draft animals essential for sowing the coming season's crops, when the flood waters receded. The Colonel then turned to Chief State Engineer Henry Richardson, who estimated that grazing lands in the northern parishes would remain flooded for at least 20 days. As this water flowed south, additional land below the Red River might also be inundated (as it was the following week). He pointed out, however, that the water was deep enough for animals to be mounted on rafts, as many already had been, and towed to dry land if tugboats were available. Major Burke then read a dispatch he had received from General Zebulon York, an Overflow Commissioner who had already begun to charter small steamboats to move refugees and livestock to higher ground in Catahoula Parish. General York was then at Troy (later known as Troyville and still later, Jonesville), where earthen mounds raised by prehistoric cultures were the only dry spots visible. The Overflow Commissioners estimated that $100,000 would be needed to purchase additional rations. At the suggestion of Mr. Burke, those present agreed to form a Central Relief Committee to collect, concentrate, and disburse private contributions. Before adjourning, the meeting approved nominations for the Central Executive Committee that was to start work the next day in quarters provided by the Cotton Exchange near the offices of the Overflow Commissioners. Before the end of the month, General York was distributing rations for animals and humans and had six boats moving refugees and stock from inundated land along the Tensas River to high ground.[114]

By March 31, the floodwaters were receding rapidly in the northeastern parishes. Still, the southward-flowing waters had inundated several parishes below the Red River, as Henry Richardson had predicted, and inflicted heavy damage on sugar crops. When the worst of the crisis had passed, good citizens from the flooded parishes wrote their newspapers to criticize the Board of State Engineers for failing to provide better protection against high waters. Henry Richardson wrote several responses to such letters, clearly arguing that the Board had done the best they could with the funds made available by taxpayers.[115]

Henry developed the same theme in the Board of Engineers' Report to the Governor dated April 20, 1882, after recognizing that "In the destruction of life and property, and in the ruinous results to the public

levees, the flood of this season stands in the history of this State without a parallel." The exceptional damages to the levee system were mainly due to the flood's arrival in January—two months earlier than usual—and the persistence of record-high waters into April. Additionally, contractors had not been able to complete some of the new levee contracts the Board had awarded due to the scarcity of efficient labor and unusually heavy rainfall during the working season.[116]

The future did not look much brighter. In summary, the engineers estimated that if the maximum rates of taxation permitted by the Constitution were actually levied, approximately $240,000 might be collected and available for levee construction, but $400,000 would be needed just "to put the levees in as good condition as they were in before the present flood." The limits on State finances meant that additional work would be needed, perhaps financed by the parishes or—hopefully—by the Federal government if Congress approved recommendations that the Mississippi River Commission had made to fill existing gaps. As for the prospect that the Federal government would assist the States with flood control, Henry was optimistic for the long term, but not for the immediate future. "We believe the general [Federal] government should, and eventually will, take charge of the Mississippi River levees, as well as its navigable channel, and that then, and not until then, its floods will be eventually restrained from overflowing the alluvial lands of the valley."[117]

Unfortunately, this prophecy was only partially realized during Henry's lifetime. Indeed, nearly 140 years later, ever-larger floods have given rise to doubts that the alluvial lands of the Mississippi basin will ever be entirely free from inundation. Since Henry was still working in an age of great faith in engineers, he would soon overcome his doubts and rejoin the faithful. For a time, it looked as though the engineers might succeed despite the Federal government's reticence to take complete responsibility for flood control. This reticence meant that Henry and his colleagues would have to fight not only against rising waters but also against legislative and administrative obstacles at all levels of government. Their struggle to recover from the flood of 1882 is worth reviewing in some detail because it set a recurring pattern for the rest of Henry's career.

By mid-July 1882, the flood waters had fallen within their riverbeds, thus enabling the State Engineers to survey the full extent of the catastrophe. On August 7, Chief Engineer Henry B. Richardson left for East

Carroll Parish, where he met Assistant Engineer Bolivar Thompson and began staking out new levees. By the end of August, Richardson was already advertising for bids on ten levee contracts. With the promotion of Bolivar Thompson from Secretary of the Board to Assistant Engineer, the Board now counted three Assistant Engineers, giving Henry more free time for negotiation with the Mississippi River Commission and coordination with the Army Corps of Engineers.[118]

Despite the pessimism of the Board's Annual Report, it soon began to look like the Federal government would appropriate sufficient funds to rebuild the minimum level of protection that the engineers deemed necessary. Since May 1882, Senators and Representatives of the flooded States had been working in Congress to include as much as possible for levee reconstruction in a massive Rivers and Harbors Bill, a recurrent effort that Congress often put off from one year to the next. The task of the legislators was not an easy one. When creating the Mississippi River Commission in 1879, Congress had specified that the duty of the Commission included making plans to "prevent destructive floods" and improve navigation. (See Chapter 11.) Notwithstanding this provision and the general agreement that levees could prevent such floods, Senators and Representatives from the Northeast maintained that the Federal government had no business promoting State projects for land reclamation and should finance levees only to improve navigation. In 1882, the Mississippi River Commission recommended $5,136,000 for surveys and improvements along the Mississippi. Congress, however, approved only $4,123,000 with the stipulation that "…no portion of this appropriation should be expended to repair or build levees for the purpose of reclaiming lands or preventing injury to lands by overflow." Congress approved the Rivers and Harbors Bill on July 26, 1882. President Arthur briefly spread consternation among Louisiana Congressmen by vetoing the Bill on August 1, 1882. The President did not oppose the Mississippi River proposals but objected to an excess of unrelated local "pork barrel" financing. In any case, both Houses overrode his veto the following day.[119]

The debate then moved to New York City, where the Mississippi River Commission met to decide how to allocate its appropriated funds. Throughout the Congressional debates, the Louisiana representatives had stressed that rebuilding the levees would improve navigation. The theory—which some considered to be of doubtful validity—was that a channel restricted by levees increased the velocity and depth of the river

during high water, which thereby deepened and widened its channel by scouring the river bed. This theory garnered enough support in the Commission to justify a substantial allocation for levees. The Commission allocated some $1,300,000 for the repair and restoration of levees in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas because a majority believed that the levees so financed would "…improve and give safety and ease to the navigation…." of the river.[120]

The Army Corps of Engineers was charged with examining bids and awarding Federal contracts for rebuilding levees following the Commission's allocations. Henry Richardson was in Memphis during the last week of September with his counterparts from neighboring States to consult on the choice of bids. On his return to New Orleans, Henry confessed to reporters that he was not completely satisfied with the results because bids were generally higher than expected but that it could have been worse:

> The amount of work to be done in Louisiana is not as large as I had hoped, but, in my judgement, the selection of works … has been judicious. The works to be undertaken are such as will prove of greatest importance to the State as a whole. Had a literal construction of the language used in the resolution of the Mississippi River Commission under which funds were allotted, or, what I understood might have been considered such construction, been strictly adhered to, we might then have had the largest and most destructive crevasses of this season in Point Coupee and East Carroll parishes remaining open….[121]

Fortunately, the Corps of Engineers had made an extremely liberal interpretation of the role that levees might play in improving navigation. Later that year, Henry Richardson went to Washington where he testified—quite honestly—before a special Congressional committee on the Mississippi "that he had considered levees as the means of protecting lands from overflow and not as improvement to navigation, though he thought it would incidentally be an improvement."[122]

In contrast, Henry's predecessor, Major B.M. Harrod, then a member of the Mississippi River Commission, clearly supported the scouring theory as he stated in a letter to the *Times-Picayune*:

> If the normal volume of water In a silt bearing stream, flowing in an alluvial bed of its own formation, be permanently increased there will result an increase of velocity, and consequently of erosion and silt-bearing power, an increase in area of average cross section, and an ultimate lowering of the surface slope; and conversely, if the normal flow be decreased In volume, there will ensue a decrease of velocity, silt-transporting power, and mean sectional area, and an ultimate raising of the surface slope.[123]

Since Henry's job was avoiding floods, whereas Harrod's was improving navigation, and since Henry's background was practical rather than theoretical, the two men's viewpoints were bound to differ. If it were displayed publicly, however, this difference of opinion between Louisiana's two leading experts on the Mississippi was bound to prove politically as well as professionally embarrassing. Apparently, both men realized the need for closer cooperation, and over the next two or three years, they became close friends and collaborators. (See Chapter 12.)

In Louisiana, contracts were let not only by the Corps of Engineers, but also by the Board of State Engineers and even the riverside parishes themselves. Eventually, Regional Levee Districts would be given greater powers and responsibilities and would employ their own engineers, but in 1882, the burden of supervising State and local projects fell mostly on Chief Engineer Henry B. Richardson and his three Assistant Engineers. Because of the large volume of construction underway in 1882 and 1883, this must have been a responsibility difficult—if not impossible—for them to manage as thoroughly as they wished.

In December of 1882, President Arthur sent a message to Congress suggesting that there was no need for a Rivers and Harbors Bill in the coming year, but that Congress might consider a special appropriation for the Mississippi River. The House Committee on the Mississippi River seized on the President's suggestion and began to prepare an additional appropriation of $1,000,000. Henry Richardson then went to Washington, where he testified before the Committee in support of that appropriation. Unfortunately, the matter then passed to the powerful Commerce Committee, which was swamped with other controversial measures. The result was that Congress adjourned without passing either a special appropriation or a Rivers and Harbors Bill for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1883. Some Federal money was still available, however, as the appropriations of 1882 had not been entirely expended,

and Congress ultimately approved a special appropriation of $1,000,000 on January 17, 1884.[124]

Samuel D. McEnery, The Levee Governor

Fortunately, the rainy season of 1882–83 along the Mississippi and its tributaries was considerably drier and shorter than the previous season. This favorable weather gave levee contractors time to finish much of the work they had undertaken under Federal and State contracts. Federal appropriations enabled the Army engineers to handle urgent projects in Northeast Louisiana, which allowed the State to reallocate funds from the Fifth Levee District to the First District around New Orleans. Where necessary, Chief Engineer Henry Richardson strongly encouraged levee districts to increase their level of taxation to the maximum of five per mill.[125]

Obviously, state taxation for levees would have to be increased, and Governor McEnery realized that tax resistance could be overcome by increasing public awareness of the State's needs. He began by inviting leading citizens and engineers to a special Levee Convention on June 18, 1883 in Baton Rouge. In his opening message, he stressed the need to rebuild a continuous line of levees along both sides of the Mississippi and to help Arkansas rebuild those levees that were just over Louisiana's northern border. This would not only reduce flood damages but also (as the Governor and many engineers professed to believe) improve navigation by keeping the main channel free of sandbars. The State, however, did not have the resources to complete this task since only $374,550 was expected to be available, whereas $1,936,000 would be required to complete the reconstruction proposal. The State would have to find additional funds by raising legislative and constitutional limits on taxation and soliciting contributions from individuals and corporations. The Governor recommended that the parishes use their recently increased taxing powers to rebuild local levees. He also reminded local authorities of their duty to keep their levees in good repair and to discourage destructive practices such as cutting temporary holes in levees and using them as roadways. A detailed Report from Henry Richardson backed up the Governor's message.[126]

The Convention heartily endorsed the Governor's suggestions by passing resolutions in their favor, and some delegates put them into practice when they went home. Tensas Parish was especially active in

repairing and replacing many of the smaller levees along its irregular riverbanks. Further downriver, a Fourth Levee District committee even canvassed for contributions from railroads and other private parties.

The delegates who spoke with McEnery at the Levee Convention led him to realize that expounding generalities on flood control would not win him many votes. On the other hand, if he could point to specific projects that his administration had realized, it could be a great help to him in his coming campaign for reelection. He took the first step in this direction when he met with the Board of State Engineers on July 5, 1883. Following this meeting, he announced a decision that cotton and sugar planters had long awaited—to rebuild the levees that would close the Morganza crevasse in Pointe Coupee Parish and the Ashton crevasse near the Arkansas border in East Carroll Parish. The previous Morganza levee had washed away during the flood of 1874, but subsequent Reconstruction regimes had not been able to close that gap. Thus, flood waters kept flowing through that immense crevasse and destroying sugar cane and other crops in southern Louisiana. The previous Ashton levee had been down since 1867. A new Ashton levee would benefit McEnery's political base of cotton planters in the Fifth Congressional District, and a new Morganza levee might win over sugar cane planters of the Fourth District, who were less inclined to support him. Each new structure would be a visible achievement of a Redeemer government, where the Reconstruction governments had been unable to act. The Board of Engineers was ready for this decision and placed advertisements for bids the following day.[127]

Three weeks later, the contract for the Ashton levee was let at 26 cents per cubic yard. This levee was to be three miles long and 12 feet high and finished by the end of the year. In contrast, contractors were not eager to bid on the Morganza project, the biggest levee the State had ever tried to build—26 feet high, 175 feet wide at the base, and 10 feet wide at the crown. The first bids were considered too high. On the second round, there was only one bid: 33 7/8 cents per cubic yard. The engineers still considered this too high, but the Governor approved the bid, stipulating that the work be completed by the end of the year. Work was to begin on September 1 and would be paid for out of the proceeds of swampland sales that were allotted to the Drainage and Levees Fund.[128]

On September 16, 1883, contractor G.A. Meyer advertised for 1,500 able-bodied men to work on the Morganza levee for $2 per day plus

board, which was considerably more than they could earn in the cotton or sugar cane harvest. On October 5, 1883, Governor McEnery inspected the work on the Morganza levee. He did not comment publicly on what he saw there, but a week after his visit, the contractor was obliged to call on the prison lessee, S.L. James, who sent 270 convicts to continue the work. The *Times-Democrat* (pro-McEnery) explained that "Hot weather and disease have played havoc among the laborers engaged by Gen. Meyer, but the work will, under any and all circumstances, be done, and in time." Labor soon became more plentiful as the cooler autumn weather brought better working conditions. By the end of October, work was progressing satisfactorily on both the Morganza and Ashton levees. Neither levee was finished by the end of the year, but they were high enough that the earliest flood waters did not overtop them. Both were completed and accepted by the State early in February—well before the peak flooding of the following month.[129]

McEnery's apparent success in rebuilding the Morganza and Ashton levees probably helped him win a full term as Governor in April 1884, as his supporters, praised his efforts to advance these and other flood control projects during the campaign. The *Times-Democrat*, owned by New Orleans Ring stalwart and State Treasurer Edward Burke, never missed an opportunity to praise the Governor and the levees being built under his administration. Nevertheless, McEnery faced growing opposition from the Reform wing of the Party, who rallied around House Speaker Ogden and former Governor Nicholls during the Democratic Party Convention. After a dispute over the accreditation of competing slates of delegates, McEnery won the nomination on December 20, 1883, by an underwhelming 42-vote margin.[130]

McEnery's victory in the April election was certain once he had secured the Democratic nomination, and the collapse of the Morganza levee in March had little or no effect on the statewide contest in May. The Morganza disaster occurred after a week of storms with high winds that sent successive waves against the still tender earthen mass of the levee. Parish officials seemed to agree that the contractors had done their work well. During and after construction, they had surveyed the new structure constantly and had kept convict workers and plantation labor busy repairing minor damages as they occurred. Finally, those efforts counted for little against the high winds and high water that brought the levee down.[131]

There were floods and broken levees all along the lower Mississippi until the beginning of April, but the overall damages were less severe than in 1882. The new Ashton levee resisted, thanks to energetic repair efforts by local labor. Again, there was considerable flooding on the Tensas River and nearby streams. Many were flooded out of their homes, and the War Department again supplied rations for the destitute. Along the Mississippi, wide crevasses occurred in Pointe Coupee Parish, and there were many breaks in Tensas and Concordia Parishes. The Corps of Engineers reported that the newer, federally financed levees held up well. Thanks to recent improvements, the Red River levees also held up well. High waters were declining in the first week of April, and if the run-off continued, there might still be time to plant corn and cotton. Overflowed sugar crops, however, would probably be lost.[132]

As the spring flood waters receded, Governor McEnery's new term began well. Preparations resumed for the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, and this flurry of activity brought renewed confidence to New Orleans businessmen and investors. Workers were soon hurrying to finish 76 acres of temporary and permanent buildings on a 245-acre site at the western end of the city that is now known as Audubon Park. State Treasurer Edward A. Burke, the chief promoter and organizer of the Exposition, became the obvious choice for its Director-General, and he did an excellent job of filling the vast exhibition halls. In addition to New Orleans, the United States, the 44 States of the Union, and 28 foreign nations also prepared exhibitions. The Exposition opened on December 16, 1884, with appropriate pomp and ceremony, including a telegraphic signal from the White House, and closed on June 1, 1885. Although the Exhibition was a huge success considering the number of exhibits and the number of visitors, it was a considerable financial loss to the city. Nevertheless, the net economic fallout for New Orleans was probably positive thanks to the renewed national attention directed toward the city and the real estate development encouraged in its hitherto neglected western end.[133]

Another accomplishment of the McEnery administration was the improved financial capacity of the State, thanks to increased powers of taxation that the legislators and the electorate accorded to the parishes and increased public awareness of the need for higher taxes. After the floods of 1882 and 1884, planters throughout the State were much more receptive to the idea of paying levee taxes, as the Board of State Engineers noted in its 1884 Report to the Governor:

> The full amount of District Levee tax permitted by the Constitution [then five per mill] has in every instance been imposed by the Commissioners, a marked change having taken place in the views of the majority of some of the Boards since the flood of 1882. We are led to believe that a much higher tax would be levied by the Commissioners in most of the Districts if allowed by the Constitution, and that such a tax would be welcomed by most of the taxpayers, if believed sufficient for protection.[134]

It was clear, however, that additional sources of funds had to be found. Legislators were much more likely to loosen the purse strings if appeals were made while the disaster of 1882 was still fresh in their minds. Thus, the Board of Engineers' 1884 Report argued vigorously for additional resources, and concluded with a passage reminiscent of Henry Richardson's finest literary efforts, which could easily be termed "a vibrant appeal" when compared to the standard bureaucratic prose of the epoch:

> Without levees, the alluvial portion of Louisiana would soon revert to a worthless and almost uninhabitable wilderness; with levees such as might be built were adequate means provided their fertility and productiveness would be unsurpassed. It remains for patriots and statesmen to devise the means. [135]

In their session of 1884, the Louisiana legislature responded to this and similar appeals by approving three important measures:[136]

- Act No. 12 authorizing the use of moneys derived from the sale of swamp lands for levee construction.
- Act No. 85 authorizing the Governor and the State Board of Engineers to contract with the lessee of the State Prison, Samuel L. James, or contractor John McGinty at favorable fixed rates for building and repairing levees during 1884 and 1885. (For information on James's operation of the State Prison, see Chapter 11.)
- Joint Resolution No. 112, of 1884, proposing an amendment to Article 214 of the Constitution, which, after approval of the amendment, enabled the legislature to increase the limit of

district levee taxes from five mills to ten mills on the dollar in 1888.

The Governor's continuing calls for additional levee funds added legitimacy to the lobbying efforts of the planter class, and by 1886, the legislators could no longer resist their unusual pleas to be taxed more heavily. Following the amendment to Article 214 of the Constitution, the legislature increased the limits on levee district taxation from five per mill to ten per mill of assessed valuation in 1888. In 1886, the lawmakers gave extraordinary powers to two districts: the Tensas Basin Levee District and the Fifth Louisiana Levee District (comprising East Carroll, Madison, Tensas, and Concordia Parishes) were incorporated, with the power to issue bonds and the ability to sue and be sued, and to sell, mortgage, pledge, and otherwise dispose of lands which the State donated and caused to be conveyed to the districts.[137]

Increased receipts and increased borrowing power meant more and better levees, which called for increased supervision. In 1885, the Board of Engineers added a fourth Assistant State Engineer, Henry Richardson's old friend John Smyth from Tensas Parish, who oversaw the Fifth Levee District until he became seriously ill in 1888. The Levee Districts' increased budgets also enabled them to hire additional engineering staff at the local level.[138]

Seeing the State take such vigorous action to protect its interests, the Mississippi River Commissioners found it much easier to recommend more generous Federal appropriations. At the same time, Congress was becoming more generous with the Mississippi River Commission; the Rivers and Harbors Bill for 1886 appropriated $2,000,000 for projects from the mouth of the Ohio River to the Gulf of Mexico. By 1887, the Federal government had spent more than $1,000,000 in the Fifth Levee District alone. With Federal help, the State had realistic hopes of reaching the objective that Governor McEnery had announced during the Levee Convention of 1883—a continuous line of levees along the west bank of the Mississippi from Arkansas to the Gulf. Notwithstanding allegations of excess profits for the lessee of the State Prison, Major Samuel James, these new funds were well spent because Louisiana experienced no severe flood damages from 1884 through the end of Governor McEnery's term in 1888.[139]

The Penitentiary Ring

Although the State had made considerable progress in flood control during his administration, Governor McEnery and his supporters in the legislature were roundly criticized for the passage and administration of Act No. 85 of 1884, which was probably one of the reasons why McEnery was not reelected in 1888. The growing Reform element in the Democratic Party condemned Act No. 85, for allegedly giving prison lessee Samuel James and contractor John McGinty a monopoly on levee construction at fixed prices considered unnecessarily generous. Although the Act did not give James and McGinty any exclusive rights to levee contracts, it did enable them to avoid competitive bidding and obtain contracts at prices approved in advance by the legislature. Armed with this law, James and McGinty were practically assured of getting the most profitable contracts awarded during the next two years.[140]

The charges levied against the beneficiaries of Act 85 were perhaps excessive, considering the probable motivations of the legislators. During the winter of 1881–84, certain contractors had been unable to find enough capable workers to finish their contracts on time. As a result, the floods of 1882 and 1884 demolished several critical but half-finished levees. Even the Morganza levee—the Governor's pet project—was finished behind schedule due to a shortage of free labor. All this was fresh in legislators' minds when Samuel James, menaced by a bill to cancel his penitentiary lease, offered the State a deal that its lawmakers found too attractive to refuse. In short, James offered to build levees at fixed rates lower than those generally practiced during the preceding year, and the State could propose contracts at these approved rates to James and McGinty without the constraints of competitive bidding. This arrangement assured that State levee projects would have enough workers since James's convicts were the largest single labor force in the State and since McGinty was known to have a large number of free laborers at his disposal.[141]

Samuel James's friend, Senator G.W. Munday, Chairman of the Senate Penitentiary Committee, introduced a bill incorporating James's offer on June 25, 1884. The Senate approved the bill without any debate—at least none reported by major newspapers—and it was passed by the House on July 9 and signed immediately by the Governor. The Senate wrote the provisions of Act No. 85 substantially as James had proposed, except that the conditions available to James and McGinty expired at the

end of 1885. The first news about the contents of the Act appeared on July 11 when the *Times-Democrat* published the first of two editorials lauding the advantages of convict labor, which the Act rendered more easily exploitable. According to the editorialist, free laborers would not work on levees before October, when the hottest weather had passed. This meant that new levees built by free laborers would not be finished in time to harden and resist spring flood waters. On the other hand, James and his associates could force convict labor to work even during the heat of summer and thus gain time for finished levees to harden and better resist spring floods. The *Times-Picayune* attacked Act 85 on July 30 but limited its criticism to the lack of competitive bidding and the unfair advantages accorded James and McGinty without alluding to the hardship inflicted on convicts by forced hard labor during summer heat.[142]

Eager to put his convicts to work under the provisions of Act 85, Samuel James wrote to Chief Engineer Henry Richardson on July 15, 1884, asking for guidance as to the contracts that might be proposed for execution by his convict forces during the coming season. Henry deferred his answer until the next meeting of the Board of State Engineers, which gave him a chance to consult with the Governor, who was Ex Officio President of the Board. In the meantime, the other levee contractors of the State held a public meeting protesting the apparent monopoly given to James and McGinty, and 25 of them signed a letter to the Governor asking for assurance that they would not be prevented from competing for levee work under the provisions of Act 85. During the meeting of the Board of Engineers, the Governor must have advised Henry to make it clear to Samuel James that he and McGinty would not have a monopoly on levee work and to have his response published to reassure the protesting contractors. Henry replied to James on July 29, "that it is our intention and expectation to recommend to the Governor that the work shall be tendered to you and to Mr. McGinty…. But in making such recommendations it is not intended to prejudice the right of the Governor at any time when in his judgement it may be to the interest of the State to do so to advertise for proposals to build levees, as provided in Act 33 of 1879."[143]

During a newspaper interview the following year, contractor John McGinty explained how he and Samuel James managed contracts while Act 85 was in effect. He first clarified that although he consulted with James on the allocation of contracts that the Board of Engineers proposed to each of them, he was not associated with James's prison

lease but operated as an independent contractor. James worked only with convict labor, and McGinty worked only with free labor. James usually disposed of about 700 able-bodied convicts, and although McGinty had employed up to 3000 men, he was not always able to carry out the work he had contracted to do. In such cases, he usually subcontracted the work at a discount of two cents per cubic yard. "As the original contractor [McGinty] had to take State warrants with a chance of having to wait for his money, while McGinty paid cash to the subcontractor, he thought two cents a yard was little enough interest on his money."[144]

Whether or not the advantages given to James and McGinty were warranted, *The Times-Picayune* carried on a steady campaign against Act 85 of 1884, against the so-called penitentiary ring, and against the McEnery administration in general. Although the newspaper may have exaggerated in making its case, Democratic reformers came to believe that James and McGinty were taking an unwarranted margin of profit at the taxpayers' expense. Although the press criticized Samuel L. James and his associates for their harsh treatment of convicts in their care, the prisoners' maltreatment appeared to be less important to the editors than the financial favors the prison lessees received. "Yet in 1882, 149 out of 700 prisoners died; in 1884, 118 out of 850 died. Nevertheless, Governor McEnery insisted that the convicts were "well taken care of, humanely treated, well-fed and clothed, and not overtasked in their labor."[145]

In any case, Act No. 85 was unfairly advantageous to James and McGinty by giving them, in practice, a right of first refusal on all State levee contracts. Additionally, in bypassing competitive bidding, the Act did not provide the safeguards necessary to protect the public interest. During the following legislature, it was replaced by Act No. 48 of 1886, which allowed the Board of State Engineers to offer contracts to the lessees of the State penitentiary, provided no satisfactory bids were obtained and provided convicts of the State prison actually did the work. Notwithstanding the expiration of James's privileges on January 1, 1886, and the passage of Act No. 48, the Board of State Engineers continued to award contracts to Samual James and his associates, and *Times-Picayune* editorialists continued to denounce such awards.[146]

In their running campaign against Governor McEnery and his supporters, *The Times-Picayune* referred to Samuel James and his associates as the "Penitentiary ring." Did such a ring exist?" Historian

Mark T. Carleton poses this question in his *Politics and Punishment*. And if it did exist, who were the members, aside from James and McGinty themselves? There surely was a group of legislators who shared an interest in preserving the penitentiary lease, but their motivations were not necessarily improper. Most of them simply believed that the lessee was saving money for the State by assuming the burden of managing the convicts. Others, such as Governor McEnery and Senator Charles C. Cordill, Chairman of the Lands and Levees Committee, cultivated a relationship with Samuel James because they found convict laborers useful for building new levees and essential for repairing breaks in levees during floods.[147]

Another man who could have been part of a penitentiary ring was Chief Engineer Henry B. Richardson. Although he was obliged to have frequent dealings with the owners of the penitentiary lease, he was quick to recognize any politically sensitive question, which he invariably passed on to the Governor. Thus, the *Times-Picayune* did not mention his name in its anti-ring editorials. Considering his modest lifestyle, it was unlikely that he received any financial benefit from his dealings with levee contractors other than regular business lunches.

In short, the politicians who favored the penitentiary lease did not appear to receive any pecuniary or other personal advantages from their support, with one exception: Peter J. Trezevant, who held a 25% interest in the rights to the penitentiary lease. Historian Michael Perman described Trezevant as "the machine's point man in the assembly," that is, a leading advocate of Bourbon interests in the State legislature. During McEnery's time in office, Trezevant was Clerk of the State House of Representatives, a position he held for 20 years before being elected as a Representative and named Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. Trezevant was also a contractor who used convicts to build levees as well as roadbeds for railroads. As one of the founders of the Merchants and Farmers Bank of Shreveport, he may have had ready access to financing that enabled him to offer credit to levee districts. In 1885, "Peter Trezevant submitted a proposal to build the levees [along the Red River] at prices fixed by Act 85 of the session of 1884. He will take the bonds of the planters in payment for the work." In any case, his political connections probably enabled him to receive payment faster than the average contractor for the warrants he received for work done under State contracts.[148]

On September 14, 1887, *The Times-Picayune* published an article about

the levees with the intriguing subtitle, "The Penitentiary Ring Receive a Satisfactory Plum." During a meeting of the Fifth District Levee Board, Charles C. Cordill moved that the Board award a contract for the massive Diamond Island levee to Peter J. Trezevant, who had submitted the lowest bid at 35 cents per cubic yard. One of the losing bidders, John McGinty, had a history of cooperation with the penitentiary lessees, and the other, George Arnold & Co., had been awarded another contract during the same meeting. These circumstances may not have led the casual reader to suspect foul play. Those who had been following the matter, however, were aware that this particular contract covered only half of the levee and that the State was to build the other half, again under contract with Trezevant, who submitted the only bid at 25 cents per cubic yard.[149]

The newspaper did not explain the difference in price between the two contracts, which could have been due to one or more of the following factors:

- The lesser cost of convict labor that Trezevant, as a representative of the penitentiary lessee, employed on the State contract, but may not have employed on the District contract.
- The difference in payment terms under which the State would pay in warrants that the State Treasurer was expected to redeem quickly, but which the District would pay by issuing ten-year bonds.
- The District's portion of the levee may have been built over more difficult terrain, which was possible since the entire levee was six miles long.

The affair's complexity was enough to arouse suspicion among those sensitive to the special privileges granted to the penitentiary lessees. Still, all was well that ended well: Chief Engineer Henry Richardson and Assistant Engineer Bolivar Thompson inspected the finished levee in November 1888 and found it well built.[150]

The Sugar Strike of 1887

Because of his record in redeeming the cotton parishes in the Fifth Congressional District, McEnery had a reputation of being able to

"manage the negroes;" however, he did not have such influence in the sugar parishes, and his reputation was not enhanced by the sugar strike that occurred shortly before the State Democratic convention.

In contrast to the cotton workers, Louisiana sugar workers had been faring rather well with average earnings “comparable to the earnings of non-agricultural workers nationwide.” In general, sugar cane planters were not in favor of the bulldozing methods used by the Bourbon cotton planters. The Senate Report on Violence in the 1878 elections concluded, "Because of the exigencies of the cane crop, there have been no serious or systematic attempts made in the sugar-growing parishes to control by violence the negro vote." Indeed, sugar cane cultivation and harvesting required skilled laborers working together as a team, and planters had found that the use or threat of force demoralized their workers, which led to reduced crop yields. Still, during the strikes of 1880, planters had called in the State Militia when workers refused to compromise.[151]

Despite the relatively favorable position of Black laborers in the sugar parishes, their purchasing power and working conditions had declined in the 1880s. In 1887, the Knights of Labor began organizing the sugar workers from the four principal sugar parishes. Planters were accustomed to negotiating with workers' groups during previous strikes, but they had never faced organized labor before and were reluctant to negotiate with the Knights. On October 19, 1887, the Knights announced their demands for the harvest season and set a strike deadline for November 1. With the harvest season fast approaching, the planters made a counteroffer that the workers rejected. Negotiations fell apart, and between 6000 and 10,000 workers went on strike on November 1. Several State Militia units left New Orleans for Thibodaux. The planters evicted striking workers from plantation housing, leaving the homeless to seek refuge in the towns. Sheriff's deputies arrested strike organizers who were overly aggressive and lodgers who refused to leave their homes.[152]

Thibodaux, where meetings and negotiations took place, was the first of several towns to receive State militia detachments. These units supported sheriff's posses and helped maintain order for a week or two by their visible presence, but they were withdrawn after two weeks, even as tension mounted later in the month. Inevitably, a few strikers began firing warning shots to discourage strike-breakers and planters who tried to harvest their cane; this enervated the city dwellers, especially in Thibodaux, where evicted strikers, planters, and white vigi-

lantes had gathered. This combustible mixture led the parish judge to declare martial law and organize patrols to guard the town. Meanwhile, discouraged strikers began drifting back to work. On November 23, a small band of strikers—perhaps rendered desperate as their strike began to collapse—shot at a group of pickets guarding the outskirts of Thibodaux and wounded two of them. The municipal guards quickly responded by killing six of the attackers and began a two-day campaign, hunting down and killing from 30 to 50 known and suspected strike leaders.[153]

> Judge Taylor Beattie, who had earlier run for governor on the Republican ticket and advocated black political rights, had organized vigilante committees and had imported armed men, reportedly experienced "nigger killers" from Shreveport, to break the strike. Shooting of Negroes began on the night of November 22 and continued through the morning of the next day. At the end it was reported that thirty blacks had been killed and more than a hundred wounded. In reality, the account of the number dead and wounded was almost certainly too low; a New Orleans reporter told of seeing many other bodies. The strike was broken, and the crop was harvested.[154]

As historian John C. Rodrigue observes, "Planters responded to the strike not only as southern white men asserting authority over black people, but also as men of property in Gilded Age America confronting labor militancy." Although Southern racism was responsible for the savagery of the repression, the planters' steadfast opposition to the strike was a reaction they shared with property owners throughout the United States at that time. The 1880s were years of nationwide concern over labor agitation and associated anarchism that reached a peak in the so-called Haymarket massacre in Chicago on May 4, 1886. During November 1887, the New Orleans newspapers ran frequent articles about the Chicago anarchists, culminating in five front-page columns in the *Times-Picayune* on November 11, 1887, covering the hanging of four alleged conspirators in the Haymarket bombing and the suicide of a bomb maker. The causes of the Thibodaux massacre may not have been entirely racist, but the bloody aftermath of the strike paved the way for further repression of Blacks in the sugar parishes during the following decade.[155]

The Gubernatorial Election of 1888

The sugar strike and its bloody solution probably did not change many voters' minds, as McEnery's opponent, former Governor Nicholls, was already a favorite of Democrats in the sugar parishes where he was born, raised, and solidly anchored. More decisive in turning opinion against McEnery were charges of unfair advantages given to the so-called penitentiary ring and clear evidence of his supporters' manipulation of Blacks' votes in the Bourbon-dominated parishes.[156]

The decisive factor in McEnery's defeat, however, was the growing opposition to the New Orleans City Ring, which had been firmly allied with McEnery's Bourbon supporters since the days of Governor Wiltz. In New Orleans, the Reform wing of the Democratic Party was drawn mainly from the business community, which had become impatient with the Ring's ward-heeling arrogation of power and the resulting inefficiency of the City government. Since Mayor Shakspeare's first term from 1880 to 1882, New Orleans had been run by the City Ring, most of whose leaders were still the same men who had organized the White League's coup d'état of 1874. Most of the Ring's supporters were white working-class men whose strong arms could be counted on to intimidate any imprudent opposition at election time. Evidence of fraud in the 1884 city elections, followed by a series of scandals during Mayor Guillotte's administration, obliged the reformers to get organized. They first tried to influence the city administration through the Citizens' Committee of One Hundred in 1885, followed by the Law and Order League in 1886. The efforts of these groups raised public consciousness, and the reformers prepared for the 1888 elections by forming the Young Men's Democratic Association, which was ready to meet the Ring's ward clubs on their own terms—with fisticuffs and Winchesters if necessary. Fortunately, extreme measures were not required to meet their first test. The city's voters were well aware that Governor McEnery and State Treasurer Burke had supported Mayor Guillotte and the rest of the city's incompetent or corrupt administrators. The reformers saw that to defeat the Ring, they should first get rid of McEnery and Burke, and that is what they did in voting for Nicholls's delegates in the New Orleans Democratic primary on January 5, 1888. Nicholls won 65 delegates from New Orleans against 39 for McEnery. A week later, at the Democratic Convention, the New Orleans delegates assured Nicholls's nomination for Governor.[157]

The Democratic nomination for Governor was expected to ensure Nicholls's election, but a seemingly innocent statement by outgoing Governor McEnery risked removing an essential moving part from the well-oiled party machine. Following the Convention, McEnery proclaimed that he would assure a "fair count" of the votes in the forthcoming general election. Since McEnery had rarely been associated with a fair count, Nicholls's campaign managers began to fear that the lame-duck Governor would tell his supporters in the Fifth Congressional District not to manipulate the Black vote for the Democrats as they had usually done. This could cause the whole machine to break down. Nicholls's Republican opponent, former Governor Warmoth, was already attracting strong white and Black support on a platform advocating a fair count and a sugar tariff. "Throughout the 1880s, Democratic gubernatorial candidates consistently received less than half the vote in the sugar parishes." If Blacks in the cotton parishes were free to vote Republican, the Democrats risked losing the Governorship. As it turned out, McEnery was only signaling that he would soon need a new job, and Nicholls is believed to have resolved their problems by promising to appoint McEnery to the State Supreme Court if McEnery delivered the Black vote as usual. On April 17, 1888, Nicholls was elected to his second term with the largest majority ever registered by a candidate for Governor, and McEnery later received his justiceship.[158]

Chapter 11
Reform and Regression

By Wednesday morning, April 18, 1888, it was clear that the Young Men's Democratic Association had won a massive victory in New Orleans. Their reform candidate, former mayor Joseph Shakspeare, was returned to office with a majority of 7000 votes, and had defeated the Ring candidate in all but two of the city's 17 wards. The *Times-Picayune* exulted in this "Triumph of the Young Democracy," and as State returns came in, proclaimed Nicholls's victory by "The Greatest Majority Ever Cast for a Governor in the State." Nicholls had also won the New Orleans vote by about the same margin accorded Mayor Shakspeare. In fact, the New Orleans vote was decisive in Nicholls' victory.[1]

A high priority for each of the new administrations was the improvement of state and city finances. In this domain, the newly elected State Treasurer, William H. Pipes, soon made a dramatic discovery:

> Treasurer E.A. Burke, who, along with many others in the McEnery faction, had lost his job quickly, then discovered that the new Nicholls administration was serious about reviewing for irregularities [in] the books that he had kept while in office. The investigation ultimately revealed that he had swindled more than $1.2 million from the state treasury.[2]

Burke was indicted but was never tried because he fled to Honduras, which had not concluded extradition treaties with the United States. Burke's emigration also had the beneficial effect of eliminating his influence over the New Orleans City Ring (the Regular Democratic Organization).[3]

Both Governor Nicholls and Mayor Shakspeare were serious about reform, but their efforts did not always produce immediate results. For example, Governor Nicholls refused to sign a proposed constitutional

amendment renewing the Louisiana Lottery's charter, but a Louisiana Supreme Court decision required the Secretary of State to present the amendment to the voters without the Governor's signature. Nicholls also opposed the penitentiary lease contract with Major Samuel L. James, which came up for renewal in 1890. He nevertheless signed the bill approving its extension to 1901 because the legislature had made no other provision for maintaining the convicts in prison.[4]

In New Orleans, Mayor Shakspeare's top priority was putting the city's finances in order. The new team immediately cut expenses and secured short-term bank loans to pay off past-due obligations. This resulted in a surplus of $30,000 in the city accounts by March 1890. By the end of Shakspeare's term, the city's debt was reduced from $844,000 to $399,000.[5]

In 1889, Mayor Shakspeare vetoed the regular payment to the Fireman's Charitable Association, which managed the city's volunteer fire companies, and the city sued the Association for failing to comply with its contractual obligations. The public, who appreciated the volunteers' past services, was not entirely pleased with this action, but the end result was a better-organized, professional fire department. The execution of this reform was typical of the Mayor's undiplomatic methods, which contributed to his defeat in the 1892 election.[6]

New Orleans was also blessed with a public-spirited City Council that often took the lead in proposing essential investments. After flooding in downtown streets in 1890, the City Council proposed, and the State legislature approved, a city tax of two mills for drainage improvement. Private parties introduced the city's first electric streetlights in 1888. By 1892, this successful initiative led the City Council to approve the installation of electric lighting throughout the city over a ten-year period. The mayor vetoed this ordinance, but the Council overrode his veto.[7]

Despite initial setbacks, the reform movement that began with the Young Democrats in New Orleans would continue well into the next century and spread throughout the South. Unfortunately, this era also witnessed a rise in state-sponsored racism, which white Southern reformers considered an essential part of their reform agendas. A well-known example of such legislation was Louisiana's Separate Cars Act of 1890. This law required railroads to provide separate and equal cars for Black and white passengers. A light-skinned Black named Homer Plessy tested the Act by riding in a car reserved for whites, and the United

States Supreme Court confirmed his conviction in Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896. The Plessy decision established the infamous "separate but equal doctrine," which was overturned only after the Civil Rights Act of 1964.[8]

Higher Levees, Higher Waters

When Nicholls began his second term, Henry Richardson may have doubted whether he would keep his job as Chief State Engineer. Henry's professional competence was unquestioned, and he had remained free of any scandals that all too often taint administrators of public works. Following the great flood of 1882, members of the State legislature had proposed the appointment of a committee "to investigate the workings of the Board of State Engineers for the past two years…," but nothing came of this proposal. In later years, the Board of Engineers and the Governor were often criticized for unfairly awarding levee contracts to Major James's convict labor force rather than to private contractors and free workers. (See Chapter 10.) The Board had good reasons for such decisions and quickly responded to these and other criticisms, usually over Henry Richardson's signature. The *Times-Democrat* readily found space for Henry's letters. Henry, however, avoided political issues and dealt at arm's length with Major James.[9]

Although Henry's professional and political record was clean, he had been such a close and loyal aide to Governor McEnery that Nicholls may have questioned whether he, too, could count on Henry's loyalty. Nicholls probably consulted Benjamin Morgan Harrod, who had served as Chief Engineer during Nicholls's first administration. Henry may have owed his job to the support of Harrod, who had become his close friend and next-door neighbor. Henry could also count on the support of his long-time acquaintance, Senator Charles C. Cordill, who had become the perennial Chairman of the Senate Committee on Land and Levees. Governor Nicholls would likely consult Cordill not only as a matter of political courtesy but also because of his political bargain with McEnery and his supporters from the Fifth Congressional District.

Of course, the most important factor favoring Henry's re-appointment as Chief Engineer was his solid and continuous record of accomplishment following the disastrous floods of 1882. In Governor McEnery's parting message to the legislature on May 14, 1888, he declared, "The Levees are in excellent condition. The line of levees on the Mississippi River is practically completed…." He reminded the

lawmakers of the improvements made since 1882 and praised the work of the State Engineers in detail, with a special mention for their Chief. In any case, Reform Governor Nicholls, an eminently fair-minded man, renewed Henry's appointment as Chief Engineer after his inauguration on May 20, 1888, thus endorsing his record of accomplishment under Governor McEnery. Now, with tacit support from both factions of the Democrats, Henry's job would prove secure for as long as he wished to hold it.[10]

Governor Nicholls was wise to keep a competent team of engineers in place because much levee work remained to be done. Louisiana would soon be devoting considerably more resources to levee construction, and the guidance of Henry's team would be needed. Soon after Nicholls's inauguration, the State legislature authorized State Levee Districts to double their tax rates from five per mill to ten per mill on assessed property evaluation in their districts. The legislature had proposed the necessary constitutional amendment in 1884; the voters approved the amendment in 1886, and in 1888, the legislature finally eased the financial straitjacket that had limited levee building in the State.[11]

At least two Levee Districts were ready to put that new money to work:

> [I]n 1886, the Tensas Basin Levee District and the Fifth Louisiana Levee District were incorporated by acts of Legislature, with Commissioners invested with greatly enlarged powers for raising revenues, and with authority to issue bonds, and do all things necessary and possible for constructing levees and protecting their districts from overflow.[12]

With increasing revenues, Louisiana would build levees higher and stronger every year, but high-water marks would also rise. If levees constrain flood waters within narrower banks, it seems obvious that the same volume of water will rise along with the levees. Several engineers in the Mississippi River Commission thought that a more concentrated and powerful stream would scour the riverbed deeper, but that did not happen. At the same time, the States upstream were also building levees and sending more water downstream. The Mississippi River drains nearly 40% of the surface of the lower 48 states, and all their excess water runs through Louisiana. Old Man River had not yet been

mastered, nor had Henry Richardson's professional life yet become a long, quiet stream.[13]

Sure enough, Louisiana flood waters rose higher than ever in the spring of 1890, even though the total discharge was less than that of 1882. Nevertheless, the Madison and Tensas Parish levees held without a break. Workers managed to contain several breaks in Concordia Parish and Baton Rouge Parish levees. Further downriver, there were crevasses in the Morganza and nearby Grand levees. Workers contained the damage, but not before the surging waters had flooded much of Pointe Coupee Parish, causing severe distress and crop loss. Breeches across the river inundated the once busy port of Bayou Sara.[14]

The Mississippi River Commissioners observed that, "By February, floodwaters had reached dangerous levels throughout the lower Mississippi River, and the MRC began diverting its remaining resources to hold the levees." As a result, State and Army engineers coordinated their efforts toward levee maintenance and emergency repairs, and Henry Richardson was able to obtain essentials such as sacks and wheelbarrows from his counterpart, Corps of Engineers Captain D.C. Kingman.[15]

The backside of New Orleans suffered minor flooding as strong winds pushed tidal waters into Lake Pontchartrain and over the incomplete levees on the Lake's southern shore. Water flowed into the city as far as Claiborne Avenue in the Eastern and Central Wards. The legislature soon responded by passing a bill to levy a tax of two mills for the drainage of the city. Additionally, in 1890, an Orleans Levee Board was organized with powers similar to those of the Tensas Valley and Fifth District Levee Boards. By September 10, the Board, with the advice of City Engineer Harrod and Chief State Engineer Richardson, was already studying bids for the construction and repair of Orleans Parish Levees.[16]

As soon as the flood waters fell, Henry and Assistant Engineer Bolivar Thompson left for Washington to testify before the Senate Committee on the condition of the river. Army Captain D.C. Kingman left for Washington about the same time, presumably for the same purpose. Testimony from State and Army engineers reinforced dramatic newspaper accounts of the floods and pushed Congress to take action. In May 1890, a joint Congressional resolution appropriated $1,000,000 in emergency money for the lower Mississippi River. After a four-month delay, Congress approved a Rivers and Harbors Bill that appropriated a record $3,500,000 for the work of the Mississippi River Commission.

Significantly, the Bill did not include the previous standard provision "that no portion of the sum hereby appropriated shall be used in the repair or construction of levees for the purpose of preventing injury to lands by overflow or for any other purpose whatever, except as a means of deepening or improving the channel of said river."[17]

On October 22, 1891, Chief State Engineer Richardson announced that the State and Districts had placed an unusually large total of levee contracts for the current season:

> "The total placement by the state and district boards is larger than any previous year that I can call to mind, and with the levees still to be built, the people of Louisiana will be in but slight danger of crevasses below the Arkansas line."…The immense amount of work done he attributed to the greatly increased revenue due to wise legislation on the part of the last general assembly, whose tax burden upon the people will in all probability be greatly reduced before many years by the decreased call for funds when levee work will have become … the maintenance and strengthening of existing lines rather than … the building of new levees.[18]

Following the 1890 floods, the State and the levee districts, with the assistance of the Mississippi River Commission (MRC), continued to strengthen the levee system. In its 1894 session, the legislature had created two new levee districts with corporate powers. In their 1896 Report, the Board of State Engineers predicted that if levee work continued at its current pace during the next four years, "it would not be a vain or unreasonable hope to believe that the levees along the Mississippi River, upon which this State is dependent for protection, may, by that time, be raised to a grade above any probable high water when completely confined between levees." For the preceding six years, however, the State had been blessed with an unusual succession of relatively low spring floods. These drier years had provided more time for the construction of new levees and for new levee work to harden before the next floods. Obviously, there was no assurance that such conditions would continue.[19]

In 1897, floodwaters reached new record highs, and breaks in the levees caused widespread damage. As the flood crest flowed down toward Louisiana on March 30, 1897, Governor Foster arranged with the Angola prison to mobilize the largest possible force of able-bodied pris-

oners to reinforce threatened levees. It was none too soon because State Senator Cordill was already demanding a team of convicts to strengthen the Kemp Levee in his home base of Tensas Parish.[20]

On April 1, preparations became even more urgent as water began pouring through four large crevasses into the Yazoo Valley, just above Louisiana's Northern border. These breaks temporarily reduced the level of the flood threatening Louisiana, but the engineers knew that the diverted waters would continue to flow southeastward along the Yazoo River and rejoin the Mississippi at Vicksburg. Thus, the flood crest would hit Madison Parish across the river with redoubled force.[21]

The New Orleans *Times-Democrat* appreciated Henry Richardson's efforts to resist the approaching high waters:

> He knows every mile of the levee system in this State, every bend in the river. He is essentially the chief among the State engineers as well as the chief and head of the body.
>
> Major Richardson is not satisfied as chief with being in the office, only distantly acquainted with the details of the work in the several levee districts. He not only consults with the other engineers on the board, but accompanies them on long tours of the levees under their immediate jurisdiction, and is very nearly as well acquainted with the details of work in the several districts as are the engineers in charge.
>
> Major Richardson is at present out of town. Last week he went to Vicksburg to a meeting of the fifth district board, and carefully examined existing conditions in that section. Returning here, he attended to the business he had on hand in the city and yesterday he left again for the fifth district to be there on the spot when the flood crest sweeps by.[22]

On April 6, 1897, flood waters began to flow out of the Yazoo River Valley, threatening levees in Louisiana. Madison Parish levees held for a week, but higher waves and seepage finally overcame a levee built with sandy soils about four miles south of Delta, Louisiana. The Biggs levee broke about 10:00 p.m. on April 16 and was soon 100 feet wide. Assistant Engineer Thompson expected the crevasse would spread to a full mile. Nearly 400 convicts had been working for three weeks to raise and strengthen the levee, which engineers had expected to hold. The

flood would inundate not only large areas of Madison Parish but also the lowlands west of Tensas Parish and the Tensas River Valley.[23]

Nannie's diary entry for April 17 adds personal touches to the newspapers' damage reports.

> H. came in the train this p.m. Got to Baton Rouge yesterday—staid last night with the Governor, and came on [illegible] today. He says the Biggs Crevasse of which we heard this A.M. will overflow the back of Tensas—so the Smythes will be overflowed. I am so sorry for them and others. Hope Mr Bass will escape serious damage…. H. looks well in spite of his two week's hard work and exposure. He says levee matters are in a very serious condition—so much water and so much more coming![24]

Henry and his team again had the help of the Corps of Engineers. Capt. George McClellan Derby, the U.S. engineer in charge of the Fourth Mississippi River District, had new funds at his disposal—part of an emergency Congressional appropriation of $250,000 available for repairs and improvements, essentially sacks and lumber for sand-bagging, wherever the levees lacked height or solidity.[25]

Mr. Otto Thoman, President of the Orleans Levee Board, was confident that New Orleans would not be flooded:

> The railroads are facilitating us in many ways. The switching facilities along the river … are first class, and City Engineer Bell and I saw the L. and N. and the I. C. [railroad] people today and made arrangements with them for the hauling of material in the event of an emergency. Between them they will have fifty cars of filling on the levee front above Jackson Street by tomorrow night, and we will have 3000 sacks filled and stacked on the flat cars immediately, ready, at a moment's notice for transportation to any point where wavewash or other unforeseen conditions may make attention to the levees necessary. Circumstances prevented us from dealing today with the head officials of the Illinois Central road, but the Louisville and Nashville is going to do its part of the work as a contribution to the public welfare. We have also arranged for several barges to be loaded with lumber and ready for use at any point and at any moment.[26]

And that was only the beginning. To keep New Orleans dry during peak high water, workers had to lay 700,000 sandbags over 21 miles of city and suburban levees.[27]

Several levees broke along Louisiana's Northeastern shores and near Baton Rouge. Still, there were no serious breaks further down the line, even though the 1897 floodwaters were the highest on record up to that time. In his annual message of May 24, 1898, Governor Murphy J. Foster congratulated all those who had worked to strengthen the levees during the record-high waters. He did not say much about the extraordinary pace of levee construction during recent years, but the figures he cited spoke for themselves. From April 20, 1892, to April 20, 1898, the State of Louisiana and its levee districts had spent $4,885,551 on levee construction and repair. This amount exceeded even the $4,028,648 the Federal government had spent for the same purposes.[28]

The Mississippi continued to flow at an unusually high level well into the summer, which delayed repairs and new construction during the 1897-98 season. When the floodwaters finally receded, Colonel G.L. Gillespie, President of the Mississippi River Commission, asked for Henry Richardson's observations on the effects of the recent flood and his recommendations, if any, regarding the Commission's policies and standards for levee construction. Henry's long reply contained numerous observations and two main recommendations: that the grade line for levees be set in relation to the high waters of 1897 rather than those of 1893 and that the work of enlarging and extending Louisiana levee lines along the Mississippi be completed as soon as possible.[29]

Henry's reply included a section on the efficiency of Louisiana's existing levees, which *The Times-Picayune* summarized succinctly on its editorial page:

> The total length of the levee lines … is 816 miles on the Mississippi River and 256 miles on interior streams, an aggregate of 1072 miles. The total width of crevasses is about one mile on the Mississippi and less than three-quarters of a mile on interior streams, an aggregate of one and three-quarter miles. This is a remarkable showing for the value of the levees, when 99 [and] 81/100 per cent of the lines remained intact and protected the rich region which lay behind them, while only 16/100 of one per cent of that vast extent of earthwork was broken and carried away. Out of 1072 miles of rampart against the flood waters, only one

and three-quarters of a mile succumbed to the force of the inundation.[30]

Although levee damage was relatively small, the overflow from the levees that did break caused extensive damage, and it was obvious that certain levees were not high enough or strong enough. Unfortunately, Louisiana's record spending on levees since 1891 had begun to strain the resources of regional levee boards. Following the 1897 flood, the Commissioners of the Fifth Louisiana Levee District met in an extraordinary session and, on the motion of Charles C. Cordill, approved the following:

- That a forced contribution of 50 cents be levied on every bale of cotton produced in the District during the 1897–98 season.
- That a forced contribution of five cents per acre be levied on all land within the district.
- That, in addition to the foregoing, the maximum ad valorem tax of ten mils on the Dollar be levied on all taxable land in the District for 1897.[31]

Taxpayers were not happy with the forced contributions, and two wards of Concordia Parish had already petitioned for relief. Nevertheless, the Board petitioned the legislature to authorize an increase in the cotton levy from 50 cents to one dollar per bale and simply referred Concordia's petitions to a sub-committee. Surely, Senator Cordill, Henry Richardson, and others concerned with flood control must have known that if such "forced contributions" continued, they would eventually be faced with a tax revolt. Fortunately, the Federal government took an increasing share in the burden of levee construction, with appropriations of $3,000,000 in 1897 and $2,000,000 in 1899.[32]

Again, levees were built higher and stronger, and from 1898 through 1902, Mississippi floodwaters were carried through to the Gulf without serious breaks. But in 1903, further breaks occurred, and the same cycle began again. Louisiana levees were first threatened on March 13, near Arlington, a southern suburb of Baton Rouge, where a large workforce managed to save the levee. On March 22, a crevasse in Bayou Lafourche inundated the Waverly Plantation and several of its sugar-producing neighbors about three miles above Thibodaux. Bayou Lafourche was a

distributary river that flowed from the Mississippi at Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico until it was dammed at its source in 1905.[33]

On March 27, newspaper headlines shifted to the Hymelia levee, where a 200-foot crevasse unleashed a nine-foot high torrent on the Mississippi's west bank, just 34 miles above New Orleans. The gap quickly spread to 450 feet, but riparian planters were reassured that a large force of men was working to control the deluge.[34]

> For the next few days, desperate and costly efforts were made to close the Hymelia Crevasse. More than 1,000 laborers were put to work constructing pile and wood cribbing, and a sandbag fill. They were making good progress when a barge crashed into the cribbing on April 7 and wrecked it. The workers tried frantically to repair the damaged section, but their task was hopeless. Early in May the work was suspended, after the expenditure of a vast amount of money, materials, and labor to no purpose.[35]

In 1903, the State Engineers regarded attempts to close large crevasses during the peak flood season as a waste of taxpayers' money. However, if a crevasse remained open and the floodwaters did not recede by the end of summer, neighboring plantations would be unable to cultivate any crops on their flooded lands. The Hymelia flood also threatened two nearby railroad lines. Consequently, engineers from the railroads and the local Lafourche Levee Board joined the effort to close the Hymelia crevasse, despite the skepticism of their more experienced colleagues. By April 17, flood levels began to fall and crib building had ceased due to lack of funds and enthusiasm. Meanwhile, a team of workers employing the same crib and sacking method successfully closed a much smaller 100-foot crevasse within three days and completed two lines of cribbing by April 9. This achievement garnered media attention not only for its success but also because the breached levee bordered the Magnolia Plantation owned by former Governor Henry Clay Warmoth.[36]

Northward in the Fifth Levee District, levees seemed to be holding up well, but suddenly, in the middle of the night of April 3, a large section of the Hollybrook levee gave way six miles south of Lake Providence in East Carroll Parish. The crevasse steadily spread beyond 1400 feet—a width then impossible to bridge with cribbing or any other available technique. After the flood crest began to fall on April 9, Chief

State Engineer Richardson and Assistant Engineer Robertson recommended against spending State funds to tie the ends of the crevasse; instead, they favored spending the money later in the year to rebuild the levee. Once the Army engineers provided the materials, however, local interests prevailed, and the ends were successfully tied by April 16.[37]

Engineer Robertson and others stressed that "High water does not mean there will be a short crop." Robertson continued:

> The damage resulting from the break below Lake Providence was not as extensive as reported. The levee at Hollybrook, where the break occurred, is some distance from the river. an extensive land formation slipping in between the river and the levee. This land is covered by a thick growth of cottonwood. This protected the levee to some extent.… [T]here had already been a fall of 41–2 feet at Lake Providence, and a fall of about 6 feet more would stop the flow through the crevasse.[38]

During the crest of the flood in April 1903, the members of the Mississippi River Commission made their semi-annual inspection cruise down the river. When they arrived in New Orleans, Commission member B.M. Harrod made his case to the newspapers for an all-levees policy:

> The result of our trip proved to me conclusively that levee construction should be encouraged; that it has been the levees that have saved the country. This statement Is best substantiated by a comparison of facts. Our previous high water stage was in 1897. During that spring there were forty-two crevasses between Cairo and the mouth of Red River. Millions of acres were inundated. This year, with the river from one foot to two and one-half feet higher than It was in 1897, we find five crevasses only—the area of land overflowed proportionately less. To my mind, the result is the absolute vindication of levees; and yet they are not at all up to the standard recommended by the Mississippi River Commission. The work done, the improvement made since 1897, have hundreds of times paid for the labor.
>
> On our trip we found that levees that had been constructed properly resisted the most violent attacks of the water. Strong

> levees are necessary for the protection of our country. And I do not question the fact that, in time, we will have them.[39]

During the 1903 floods, Henry Richardson did not rush to the scene of every minor disaster as he had during previous floods. Rather, he seemed to rely more on his assistants and let them handle the newspaper interviews. Perhaps he was already preparing them to take on further responsibilities. Surely, levee building on the Mississippi was proving to be a never-ending job, and Henry, 68 years old, must have been weary of the struggle. Fortunately, relief was in sight.

In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Henry Brown Richardson to the Mississippi River Commission to replace his friend and neighbor, Benjamin Morgan Harrod, who had been named to the Panama Canal Commission. With effect from March 31, 1904, Henry resigned as Chief of the Board of State Engineers to accept this new appointment, the recognition of a lifetime of service.[40]

On his retirement, his colleagues in the State Board of Engineers presented him with a silver cup, engraved as follows:

> Henry Brown Richardson, Chief State Engineer of Louisiana, September 6, 1880, to March 31, 1904. From your Colleagues: Sidney F. Lewis, Arsène Perrilliat, Marshall P. Robertson, Frank M. Kerr, In token of their great esteem and deep friendship. March 31st 1904.[41]

Governor Heard appointed Frank M. Kerr as Chief State Engineer on April 8, 1904.[42]

New Orleans's Leading Lawyer

Edgar Howard (Ned) Farrar was one of Anna Farrar Richardson's (Nannie's) younger brothers. Born in 1849, he was the oldest of Thomas Prince Farrar's seven sons and the only one to have achieved prominence in public life. He seemed destined for the law from childhood and took an interest in his father's cases and clients from an early age.[43]

After his preparatory courses in Baton Rouge, he studied at the University of Virginia, where he received his Master of Arts degree in 1871. He was then admitted to the Louisiana bar in 1872, but sources disagree on how he prepared for the bar examination. Henry Planche

Dart, his biographer and fellow lawyer, claimed that he dropped out of the University of Louisiana (now Tulane) law school because he was not satisfied with the professors or the curriculum, and that he prepared for the bar examination on his own. The *Tensas Gazette*'s obituary, however, states that he prepared by entering the New Orleans law office of the highly respected Christian Roselius, who was also a professor of civil law at the University of Louisiana.[44]

His early career path is not clear either. Dart states that Farrar practiced with his father in St. Joseph until 1875. However, his obituary in the *New Orleans Item* cites anonymous "attachés of the courts," who claimed that Farrar had been one of the leaders of the White League insurrection of September 14, 1874, which would have been compatible with his temperament and his political convictions.[45]

Once on his own in New Orleans, he shared a small upstairs office with two other young lawyers, one of whom later claimed that Farrar received no clients for six months but spent days and hours on end in further study of the law. Finally, Farrar received his first case from a kinsman, E. Howard McCaleb, a well-established lawyer, who could not handle the matter himself for personal reasons. Farrar prepared himself thoroughly, won the case, and began to build his reputation and his clientele.[46]

Edgar Farrar's growing practice and income soon enabled him to think seriously of founding a family, and in 1878, he married Lucinda Davis Stamps, who was Jefferson Davis's grandniece, a relationship that did not hurt Farrar's career prospects. Notable witnesses at their wedding were Jefferson Davis and Edward D. White. The second witness was probably Edward Douglass White, who was appointed Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court in 1878 and later became Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.[47]

Edgar Farrar served as Assistant City Attorney of New Orleans from 1878 to 1880. He was responsible for all the city's financial litigation under the supervision of City Attorney E. Howard McCaleb. The City Council elected him as City Attorney in 1880. Subsequently, he worked in private practice with McCaleb, a distant relative of the Farrar family. He ran unsuccessfully for the State Senate in 1884 as a candidate of the Citizens' Democratic and Parochial Party, an ephemeral group that city businessmen organized hastily in opposition to the City Ring. The Citizens' Party stood no chance against the disciplined Ring, whose poll workers "counted them out"—that is, fraudulently manipulated ballot

box tallies—and won the Orleans Parish elections by a landslide. The City Ring had good reason to block the rise of this young lawyer who, in 1879, had campaigned actively against their candidate for Governor, Lewis B. Wiltz, and in favor of his opponent, Fred Ogden. Farrar's biographer claimed, however, that he never considered a career in political office but was interested only in doing what he could to clean up the mess in City Hall.[48]

Even before Edgar Farrar abandoned a career in government, he discovered that he could have an even greater influence on government reform while acting as a private citizen. In the spring of 1880, he addressed the University of Louisiana's graduating class. Rather than repeating the usual platitudes graduates hear in such speeches, Farrar seized the occasion to pronounce a detailed critique of State education policy. He began by denouncing the waste of public funds for education under Reconstruction governments and the low limits on taxation for schools under the redeemers' State Constitution of 1879. He then ridiculed the minuscule budgets the State allotted to primary education, which had resulted in one of the highest levels of illiteracy in the nation among whites as well as Blacks. Despite a negative evaluation of the State's educational policy, he did find words of praise for the university to whose graduates he was speaking. The medical department was in "the front rank of medical colleges." The law department had reached "a position of dignity and influence that attract attention and challenge the highest respect." The academic department, despite a lack of resources in its early years, was now certain "of a development in the future which will make it the peer of the other departments, and a source not only of gratification but of incalculable benefit to the people of this city and the whole of Louisiana." If the graduates had been catching up on sleep missed due to the previous night's celebrations, they were quickly aroused from their torpor. At first, the newspapers did not know quite what to make of Farrar's unexpected exposition, but educators and other influencers were pleased to hear such a powerful presentation of what they already knew.[49]

Farrar's speech did not inspire any immediate action in the legislature, but other interested parties took note, including the millionaire philanthropist Paul Tulane. On May 2, 1882, Tulane proposed to donate all of his property in New Orleans, with an estimated value of $1,000,000, to an entity to be established in Louisiana for educational purposes. A group of 17 men, including Senator Randall L. Gibson,

Justice Edward White, and Edgar H. Farrar, would administer the property and decide on the beneficiary or beneficiaries of its income. Once the administrators had established the Tulane Education Fund, they discussed what to do with its income. Senator Gibson, President of the Fund and a close friend of Paul Tulane, probably had the most influence on his thinking. However, Edgar Farrar's biographer, Henry Dart, credits Farrar with the plan to organize Tulane University and merge it with the University of Louisiana. In any case, this result was consistent with the recommendation implicit in Farrar's speech of 1880: that the State should concentrate educational endowments where they would do the most good, rather than scatter them in small amounts across the State. Thus, Farrar's speech prompted improvement in higher education, but primary and secondary education in Louisiana continued to stagnate for another generation.[50]

Meanwhile, Farrar was building his law practice. He entered a partnership with Ernest B. Kruttschnitt in 1884, and former Senator B.F. Jonas joined the firm in 1889. The present narrative will focus on Farrar's civic and political work, which he pursued so passionately that one might wonder how he managed to become one of the highest-earning lawyers in New Orleans.[51]

But Farrar's reform efforts were just beginning, and for the next 20 years, he participated actively in nearly every major reform undertaken in the State of Louisiana. Indeed, a biography of Farrar's public life could also serve as a history of the New Orleans reform movement during that time, with most of that movement's negative as well as its positive aspects. In 1885, Farrar was elected Chairman of the Citizens' Committee of One Hundred, organized that year to combat rampant corruption in the administration of New Orleans Mayor Guillotte. The Committee harried Guillotte and his supporters with lawsuits and public denunciation at every turn. Their efforts turned public opinion against the City Ring and prepared the way for the second term of reform Mayor Joseph A. Shakspeare.[52]

Farrar was noted for his passionate pleadings in the courtroom. His colleague and biographer, Henry Dart, commented on the often "explosive quality of his speech:"

> When he was with you or against you in a case, you were more or less apprehensive that sooner or later he would lay violent hands on somebody or something, and while he presented his case at

> the bar in a more moderate fashion, it was always within the possibilities that something would happen.[53]

Farrar's passionate nature, although an occasional liability in court, was one of the characteristics that made him a leader in the Louisiana reform movements of the 1890s. Additionally, he was endowed with a powerful intellect and had acquired a reverence for the law and a determination to pursue his particular ideals of right and justice. At times, however, Farrar's passion for justice—or his idea of justice—could lead him astray, and that is what may have happened when he was Chairman of the Committee of Fifty in 1890.

The Italian Lynching

On the dark and rainy night of October 15, 1890, Police Superintendent David C. Hennessy was walking home with his friend, Bill O'Connor, a Captain in a private police force. Near midnight, they separated several blocks from Hennessy's house, and each went his way. Hennessy was about 50 feet from his doorway when four or five men, who had been waiting for him across the street, fired a hail of lead that mortally wounded him. When O'Connor heard the shots, he ran to his fallen friend, who whispered, "dagoes," in his ear. Six slugs and several shotgun pellets had entered Hennessy's body, but he lingered on for more than nine hours, clear-headed and able to converse for most of that time. If he recognized any of his assailants, he did not name them.[54]

That night, Mayor Joseph A. Shakspeare ordered the police to round up all the Italians in the neighborhood. The police asked several witnesses to identify the fugitives among the dozens arrested. Although most of the witnesses were not very confident, the police charged five men that night based on these identifications.[55]

At a special City Council meeting on Saturday, October 18, Mayor Shakspeare made the following accusation:

> The circumstances of the cowardly deed, the arrests made, and the evidence collected by the Police Department show beyond doubt that he was the victim of Sicilian vengeance, wreaked upon him as the chief representative of law and order in this community, because he was seeking, by the power of our American law,

> to break up the fierce vendettas that have so often stained our streets with blood.[56]

The Mayor continued in an increasingly emotive vein, alleging that the perpetrators were the instruments of secret "murder societies" and proclaiming that "These societies must perish or the community itself must perish." Although the Mayor did not mention any possibility of extra-legal action, the force of his words surely led the Councilmen and others to infer that the Mayor would not oppose such action if legal means failed.[57]

The City Council approved the Mayor's message and requested him to appoint a committee of 50 or more persons to investigate the existence of such secret societies and to devise means for their annihilation. The Mayor then appointed a committee of 83 prominent men with Edgar H. Farrar as Chairman. Curiously, the committee was thereafter known as the Committee of Fifty.

On October 23, 1890, the Committee published a "Special Notice to the Italian Population of New Orleans," which read in part:

> Vendettas must cease and assassinations must stop. To this we intend to put an end, peacefully and lawfully if we can, violently and summarily if we must. Upon you and your willingness to give information depends which of these courses shall be pursued. We pledge the manhood of this community to protect and defend all those who come forward to assist and give us information.[58]

With this open letter, the most prominent businessmen and other leading citizens had put themselves on record. From the beginning of their investigation, they stated they were ready to use extra-legal means to eliminate the perceived menace from the Italian community. Although the Committee meetings were secret, it appears that they never found more than circumstantial evidence of any conspiracy, much less the existence of any secret Mafia organization.

On October 24, New Orleans's two leading newspapers, *The Times-Picayune* and *The Times-Democrat*, expressed their disapproval of the Committee's actions. Their editorials began with nearly identical texts:

> We feel called upon to express our emphatic disapproval of several of the recent actions of the Committee of Fifty, appointed by the Council to suppress the Mafia and arrest the assassins of Chief Hennessy.
>
> Instead of allaying the excitement the committee is, by its extraordinary and unjustifiable actions, adding fuel to the fire, and unless calmer and more discreet counsels prevail the result will be deplorable rather than satisfactory.[59]

For the next ten days, the newspapers ignored the Hennessy case while devoting their attention to the Congressional elections. Early in November, the Grand Jury began to examine witnesses, and on December 16, it returned an indictment for the murder of Chief Hennessy against 19 Italians. Curiously, Edgar Farrar resigned as Chairman of the Committee of Fifty after the indictment. The reason he gave was the demands of his law practice, but he was not the kind of man to quit before finishing the job. Given the trial's outcome, it is possible that he felt the prosecution did not have a case strong enough to convict the accused. Nevertheless, the Committee of Fifty continued meeting with Walter C. Flower as Chairman.[60]

The accused were said to be part of a large conspiracy led by Joseph P. Macheca, the most prominent and wealthiest Italian in the city. They were to be tried in two separate groups, the first comprising nine persons and the second ten persons. The trial of the first group began on February 28 and ended on March 12. Observers in the courtroom believed that the prosecution presented a strong case, but cross-examination left doubt in the minds of some jurors. Surely, positive identification was difficult on the dark and rainy night of the murder, as the jurors discovered when they visited the scene of the crime. Additionally, the defense was able to present credible witnesses who provided alibis for all of the accused.[61]

Opinions differed regarding the strength of the prosecution's case. The Grand Jury that met after the trial praised it as, "Clear, complete, continuous, convincing…." The U.S. Attorney who reviewed the transcript of the trial, however, characterized it as "…exceedingly unsatisfactory, and is not, to my mind, conclusive one way or the other."[62]

Before sending the jurors out on March 12, the Judge instructed them to return a verdict of innocent for two of the accused against whom the prosecution had presented no evidence. The jury debated until the

following afternoon, but could not agree on a verdict for three of the accused, which resulted in a mistrial for those three. They found the remaining six defendants not guilty. The judge ordered the defendants returned to prison, as they were still under indictment for a lesser included offense. When the judge read the verdict, the spectators in the courtroom immediately began shouting in outraged disapproval, and the crowd gathered outside soon joined in the noisy protest. Rumors of jury corruption began flying around the city. The prosecution had not proved its case to the jury. But the rest of New Orleans, especially the reform wing of the Democratic Party, still expected the "dagoes" to be punished.[63]

Between 4 and 5 o'clock that afternoon, around 30 of the leading Reform Democrats of the city met in the law offices of Mr. William S. Parkerson. That evening, at least one leader of the City Ring, James D. Houston, joined them in a more spacious venue on Royal Street and decided to convene a mass meeting the following morning and to publish the following notice in the newspapers:

> All good citizens are invited to attend mass meeting on Saturday, March 14, at 10 o'clock A.M., at Clay Statue, to take steps to remedy the failure of justice in the Hennessy case.
>
> Come prepared for action.[64]

Of the 61 persons whose names were printed below this notice, seven were also members of the Committee of Fifty, including its first Chairman, Edgar H. Farrar.[65]

From the moment the morning papers appeared, tragedy was inevitable. When Pasquale Corte, the Italian Consul, saw the notice, he rushed to the Mayor's office, but no one seemed to know where Shakspeare was. Corte then sought out Governor Nicholls, whom he found at his breakfast table. Nicholls claimed he could not intervene without the Mayor's permission and attempted unsuccessfully to reach him by telephone. Surely, Mayor Shakspeare already knew what was about to happen. Even if the Mayor was not directly involved in organizing the lynchings, his right-hand man and former campaign manager, Mr. William S. Parkerson, was expected to keep him informed.[66]

Even as Consul Corte was pleading with the Governor, Parkerson was preparing to mount on the base of the Henry Clay Statue and exhort

the assembled mob to do their "public duty." Parkerson closed his appeal by challenging his vast audience:

> Will every man here follow me and see the murder of D.C. Hennessy vindicated? Are there men enough here to set aside the verdict of that infamous jury, every one of whom is a perjurer and a scoundrel? Men and citizens of New Orleans, follow me, I will be your leader.[67]

Walter D. Denegre and John C. Wickliffe harangued the crowd after Parkerson. All three speakers were active in the Reform wing of the Democratic Party and supporters of Mayor Shakspeare. A fourth political figure, James D. Houston, joined the leadership of the lynch mob but did not speak at the Clay Statue. As Houston was active in the Regular Democratic Party (the City Ring) and had been the campaign manager for Shakspeare's opponent in the 1888 election, his participation lent an aura of united political support for the lynching. Wickliffe finished his speech with the command, "Gentlemen, let's go and do our duty," and the crowd of around 6000 set off toward the Parish Prison. Their numbers grew to 12,000—or even 20,000, according to some estimates—by the time they reached the jail.[68]

Along the way, 70 to 100 men armed with repeating rifles joined the procession. These were the men of the execution squad that the reformers and the Ring Regulars had decided to organize at their meeting the previous evening. The leaders of the operation realized that by recruiting a disciplined squad to do the dirty work, they might avoid the unforeseeable consequences of letting a bloodthirsty mob run wild inside the prison. Although it is not clear who recruited and organized the execution squad, James D. Houston, as boss of the Ring, had the connections necessary for that task.[69]

After trying unsuccessfully to obtain reinforcements from City Hall, Lemuel Davis, the Prison Warden, knew he could not defend the prisoners. He released them from their cells and told them to hide themselves as best they could as the mob battered down the prison gate. The execution squad and some self-appointed executioners rushed in, found most of the 19 Italians, and shot 11 of them. To satisfy the horde outside the prison, the leaders let them have two of the half-dead victims. They strung one of them up on a lamppost and the other on a tree and riddled them with bullets. The other corpses were arranged inside the prison so

that those who wished could file past and see that the executioners had done their supposed duty.[70]

Of the 11 dead, five had not even been tried, three had been tried and found not guilty, and three had been tried, but no verdict had been reached. Of the eight who escaped execution, three had been found not guilty, and five had not been tried. The eight surviving prisoners were released, and all charges against them were dropped.[71]

The Grand Jury began to investigate the lynchings on March 17. According to Professor Richard Gambino, a noted spokesman for Italian-Americans, "From the beginning, it was clear that its role was to justify the lynchings rather than truly investigate them or indict those responsible for them." They brought no indictments against any in the lynch band, although its leaders and supporters had openly proclaimed their identities. They found no evidence of tampering with the jury itself, but they did indict five detectives and a lawyer for attempted bribery of prospective jurors. Two of the detectives and the lawyer were convicted and sent to prison.[72]

Considering Edgar Farrar's known respect for the law, it is disconcerting to see his name among those calling for a mob to assemble at the Clay Statue in order "to remedy the failure of justice" on March 14. There is no evidence that Farrar joined that mob, but he was surely part of the group that met on the evening of March 13 and decided to storm the New Orleans jail. If Edgar Farrar and others hesitated to take the law into their own hands, those misgivings were overcome by the conviction that the accused Italians were part of a mafia-like menace to law and order in New Orleans. Community solidarity was essential for those who led the lynch mob: William S. Parkerson, Walter D. Denegre, and John C. Wickliffe. These men were also among the leaders of the YMDA, who had brought Mayor Shakspeare to power, and who had also begun their campaign to destroy the Louisiana Lottery. Solidarity would also be crucial for all those reformers who had united to form the Anti-Lottery League, including Edgar Howard Farrar.[73]

Destroying the Lottery

In 1890, the Louisiana Lottery Company had launched a campaign to obtain renewal of its State charter, which was set to expire in 1894. The serious floods in the spring of that year gave the Lottery an opportunity to court public opinion by offering contributions for relief to New

Orleans and other flood-damaged cities along the rivers. Reform-minded businessmen saw what was coming and began organizing the Anti-Lottery League in February 1890. The Lottery's principal stockholder, John A. Morris, launched the Company's campaign on April 17 with a brief circular letter to the newspapers announcing that in the coming session of the legislature, he would submit a proposal to maintain a Lottery for 25 years for an annual fee of $500,000. Morris's announcement prompted the League to hold its first public meeting, which filled New Orleans's Grunewald Hall beyond capacity on April 28, 1890. By that time, the Anti-Lottery League was combat-ready with branches throughout the State. Even so, there was little the League could do to fight Morris's proposal in the legislature, where a majority of Assemblymen and Senators were favorable to the Lottery, thanks in part to its generous campaign contributions during the recent election.[74]

On May 27, 1890, the Lottery's bill was introduced in the legislature as a constitutional amendment. By that time, an offer from a competing syndicate had forced the Lottery Company to increase its proposed annual payment to $1,000,000. Negotiations continued, and by the time the bill passed both houses on July 2, the annual payment was further increased to $1,250,000 per year. Governor Nicholls promptly vetoed the bill. The House overrode his veto, but the Senate could not round up enough votes to do so. The bill's proponents then claimed that a constitutional amendment did not need the Governor's signature, but the Secretary of State was not convinced and refused to promulgate the bill. The question, therefore, had to pass before the courts and was not resolved for several months.[75]

The Anti-Lottery League, however, continued its campaign on the assumption that the Lottery amendment would be submitted to the people at the next State election in April 1892. During their first Convention, held in Baton Rouge on August 7 and 8, 1890, the League displayed all the characteristics of a regular political party. The keynote speech was given by State Senator Murphy J. Foster, who would later become the League's nominee for Governor. Foster warned citizens of the risk that the Lottery would take control not only of the Democratic Party but of the entire State government. Edgar Howard Farrar also played a prominent role in the Convention. He eloquently denounced the evils of the Lottery Company and left his audience with several memorable phrases, including, "If you attempt to run a democracy and an oligarchy together, the oligarchy will swallow up the democracy. It

has always been so throughout the history of the world." This was a theme to which Farrar would return in several notable speeches, but which he would conveniently forget a few years later.[76]

While the Anti-Lottery Convention was in progress, the Federal government was also preparing to deal the Lottery Company a decisive setback. In July 1890, President Harrison sent a message to Congress pointing out that through their use and misuse of the United States mails, the Louisiana Lottery had made the government an unwilling partner in the unsavory business of gambling. The President recommended, "severe and effective legislation to purge the mails of all letters, newspapers, and circulars relating to that business." Congress passed the requested legislation on September 19, 1890, and in 1895, it would legislate against the interstate transportation of Lottery tickets by any other means. Since 93% of its revenue came from outside Louisiana, the Lottery was effectively a zombie company once it was no longer able to use the mails or even private express companies.[77]

On April 27, 1891, however, back on the Lottery Company's home ground, the Louisiana Supreme Court finally ruled in their favor, which meant that their Constitutional amendment would be presented to the voters at the next gubernatorial election in April 1892. Despite their setback at the Federal level, John A. Morris and his associates still believed they could find a way to continue their profitable Lottery business and intensified their campaign. The Anti-Lottery League also redoubled its efforts to defeat the constitutional amendment. This campaign soon merged with the gubernatorial campaign, and differences on the Lottery question grew so sharp that they split the Louisiana Democratic Party. At the grass-roots level, League members carried on a door-to-door canvass, following Edgar Farrar's advice "to proselyte our friends with amiability." Prominent businessmen, politicians, and ministers of the gospel harangued thousands at mass meetings in New Orleans and smaller gatherings in the parishes.[78]

One key element in the League's success was the solid support of the Louisiana Farmers' State Union (not to be confused with the Farmers' Union of the 1930s). A group of small white farmers had formed this organization in the 1880s to better resist the squeeze between declining harvest returns and rising prices demanded by monopolistic suppliers. The Farmers' Union had grown rapidly from a minuscule group in northern Louisiana to a potentially powerful organization with 20,000 members at its peak. In 1891, when the Farmers'

Union held its annual convention, a delegation from the Anti-Lottery League proposed that the two groups join forces. Together, they would try to take control of the Democratic Party's nominating convention in December 1891. If successful, the Farmers' Union would get the nominations for Governor, State Treasurer, and Superintendent of Education. The Farmers' Union voted by a large majority to accept this offer and chose Union President Thomas S. Adams as their candidate for Governor.[79]

When the Democratic nominating convention met on December 15, 1891, the Party was almost evenly split between pro-Lottery and Anti-Lottery delegates, and the League-Union alliance was not able to take control of the convention as they had hoped. The pro-Lottery Democrats withdrew into a separate convention that nominated Samuel D. McEnery for Governor. The Anti-Lottery faction then realized that their presumptive nominee, Thomas S. Adams, did not have the stature to defeat McEnery. The League's top persuaders took Adams aside and pressured him to withdraw. Adams resisted but finally agreed to a charade that would save face for himself and the Farmers' Union. Adams would be nominated but would immediately withdraw in favor of a better-known Anti-Lottery Democrat. After receiving the nomination, Adams hesitated but finally mounted to the speaker's lectern and declined the nomination in the interest of "the great cause" and suggested the names of several prominent Democrats, starting with Murphy J. Foster. The Convention proceeded to nominate Foster, and Adams received the nomination for Secretary of State as a consolation prize.[80]

Following their separate conventions, the two Democrat factions remained far apart on the Lottery issue, but the leaders of both sides realized that if they faced the voters separately, they would expose the Party to possible defeat by the Republicans, and to the consequent dangers of "Radical and negro rule." Therefore, the executive committees met and, on February 20, 1892, agreed to hold a statewide Democratic "white primary" to determine whether the Party would unite behind McEnery or Foster. The primary was held on March 22, but the results were so close that neither side would accept them, and the two factions presented their tickets separately at the general election on April 19. Fortunately for the Democrats, the Republicans had also split, and Murphy J. Foster won the Governorship by a comfortable plurality. At the same time, the voters also decisively rejected the Constitutional

amendment, and the Louisiana Lottery Company's charter expired on January 1, 1894.[81]

During the disputed white primary, Edgar Farrar showed his commitment to the Anti-Lottery cause by serving as a poll-watcher to ensure, so far as possible, that only Democrats voted. When Mr. Albert Baldwin Jr. deposited his ballot for McEnery, Farrar challenged his vote, claiming that Baldwin was a Republican. An argument ensued, during which Farrar, a massive six feet or more, slapped the diminutive Baldwin in the face. A year later, Farrar had apparently forgotten the incident and approached young Baldwin's father, the President of the New Orleans National Bank, to ask him a favor. The senior Baldwin, however, turned his back and refused to speak to him. Farrar could not support such an affront and challenged Mr. Baldwin to a duel with pistols at 20 paces. When Farrar's seconds presented his challenge, Baldwin further scorned his angry opponent by pointing out that he was old enough to be Farrar's father and that dueling was not only illegal but outmoded as a method of settling disputes. The city's two major newspapers seem to have ignored the incident, but one out-of-town daily could not resist reporting this example of Farrar's passionate and often choleric disposition.[82]

After the State and City elections, the leaders of the Democratic Party restored a semblance of party unity, but the aftermath was not so happy for the Farmers' Union. Disgruntled farmers accused the Anti-Lottery Democrats of betrayal through a conspiracy organized by supporters of Murphy J. Foster. They may well have been right. Foster was long known as a proponent of restricting suffrage to literate, educated voters. His reform bloc would, therefore, have no compunctions about breaking its promises to the Farmers' Union, many of whose members were illiterate. The Farmers also accused their leadership—especially Thomas Adams—of treason for capitulating to the demands of the Democrat reformers. The Union rapidly disintegrated as members left to support the new Populist party, which grew steadily over the next four years.[83]

New Orleans Drainage and Sewerage

New Orleans' need for drainage and sewerage systems became increasingly urgent during the 1890s, but the city had to overcome a bewildering array of technical, financial, and political obstacles before these problems could be solved. The most important problem was that part of

the city—the precincts farthest from the river—was even then below sea level and slowly sinking. For a time, however, the financial obstacles seemed the most difficult to overcome. City Councilman Abraham Brittan, one of the city's most persistent promoters of drainage projects, tried in 1888 to obtain the legislature's approval of a two per mill property tax to finance New Orleans drainage. Later that year, Edgar H. Farrar organized a Citizens' Drainage and Paving Association to advance a drainage project. Farrar's idea was to protect the project from graft and corruption by confiding it to a semi-independent Drainage Commission that would be relatively free from political interference. While Farrar drafted an ordinance to set up and structure the proposed Commission, Association members solicited contributions to fund a special municipal election and canvassed voters for their support. However, voters were unhappy with the three per mill tax included in the ordinance, and the project was voted down on May 28, 1889. The following year, voters were sorry they had not taken the matter more seriously, when levee damage let water run as high as 18 inches in the streets of the business and commercial districts. The City Council then managed to obtain passage of a two per mill tax to finance a stop-gap solution through improvement of the city's canals.[84]

Mayor John Fitzpatrick, elected in 1892, was keenly interested in solving the city's drainage and sewerage problems. In his first year in office, with City Council authorization, the Mayor appointed consultant Rudolph Hering, former City Engineer B.M. Harrod, and Chief State Engineer Henry B. Richardson to advise the City Engineer on preparing and executing a new drainage system. In January 1896, the City Council received and approved the completed specifications. At the last minute, as bids were about to be received, Mayor Fitzpatrick vetoed the project because, in his opinion, the financial plan did not guarantee it could be successfully completed. He suggested that a project of such size and duration should be presented to the voters.[85]

Fitzpatrick's veto was perhaps prompted by the financial panic of 1893 and the subsequent depression that lasted until 1897. Indeed, tight money was partially responsible for the slow death of the New Orleans Sewerage Company's franchise to provide a sewer system for the city. Fortunately, the city had not made any immediate financial commitment to the Sewerage Company but had simply awarded them a concession to install and operate a sewer system. Edgar Farrar had a hand in devising the terms of the franchise, and his law firm served as legal counsel to the

Company. The City Council approved the project on August 1, 1893. Because of financial problems, the Company's contractors did not even start work until the spring of 1894. Work continued by fits and starts for the next two years and reached a standstill in 1896, by which time only two blocks of sewer pipe had been laid. After the victory of the Citizens' League over the Regular Democrats in 1896, the new City Council revoked the Sewerage Company's franchise.[86]

Walter E. Flower, the new Mayor, was elected as the candidate of the reformist Citizens' League, whose platform supported not only the drainage system but also a sewer system and a renovated freshwater system. In fact, important outbreaks of yellow fever in the previous two years had made this expanded plan an urgent necessity. Councilman Abraham Brittan, who represented the Citizens' League and was a long-time supporter of improved drainage, strongly supported the three projects, which were to be placed under the control of the existing Drainage Board. As the City Council was solidly in favor of Brittan's plan, he then proposed to submit to the taxpayers a bill for a special tax not to exceed two and one-half mills for a project covering all three functions. The City called on Edgar H. Farrar to draft the ordinance that provided the legal framework for the drainage system; the City Council approved the ordinance, and after a lengthy campaign, the voters adopted the constitutional amendment imposing the two-and-one-half-mill tax. After a ten-year struggle, the major legal and financial obstacles had been overcome. Although more than another decade would pass before the ambitious project was completed, New Orleans could look forward to better drainage and a healthier future.[87]

Meet Jim Crow

As historian Raymond Nussbaum has pointed out, during these last years of the 19th century, it was always a similar group of reform-minded businessmen who promoted the reform agenda in New Orleans municipal elections. Contrary to the Regular Democrats (also known as the Ring), who maintained a permanent organization, the reformers had to reorganize for every election. In 1884, they founded the Citizens' Democratic Parochial and Municipal Party; in 1888, the Young Men's Democratic Association; in 1892, the Anti-Lottery League; and in 1896, the Citizens' League. In 1892, however, the reformers had to concentrate their efforts on the statewide campaign against the Lottery, and their

municipal campaign was weak and poorly organized. As a result, the efficient Ring machine easily carried John Fitzpatrick and his Regular ticket to victory over incumbent reformer Joseph A. Shakspeare.[88]

Under Fitzpatrick's leadership, the city made progress toward resolving its drainage problems, but his administration was plagued by the sort of scandals that were endemic in the Regular Democratic machine. Ten of the 30 City Councilmen had been indicted for corruption. Fitzpatrick also incensed members of the business community by his support for labor unions and his failure to suppress strikes. In response, the reformers organized the Citizens' League, with a platform of ambitious reforms, including a new city charter. "The result would be improved police and fire departments, cleaner streets, and a better drainage system. Perhaps most importantly, an honest city government would bring needed additional capital to the city, capital which had been discouraged by corrupt machine politics."[89]

The Citizens' League's campaign, which began on January 11, 1896, met with such early success that the Regular Democrats didn't know quite what to do. Governor Murphy J. Foster had ridden to power in 1892 on a statewide wave of reformist sentiment against the Louisiana Lottery Company. At that time, he had the solid support of the New Orleans reformers. As a candidate for reelection, however, Foster realized that his success depended on the statewide unity of the Democrats —including the scandal-ridden Regular Democrats—and the popularity of the Citizens' League was an obvious threat to that unity. Governor Foster and the State Democratic Central Committee would have to support and revitalize the New Orleans Regular Democrats. The Governor came down to New Orleans in February and spent a few days giving the Ring leaders of the Regulars some stern advice. One of his spokesmen met the press and admitted that "a renomination of the present city officers to any extent would mean defeat. Enough of the ward leaders understand this to force the nomination of a ticket that the average Democrat can support." In other words, Fitzpatrick and his cohorts would have to withdraw their candidacies for reelection. The Governor's aide went on to confide that "The Democratic campaign committee is at the present time bending every energy to draw party lines as tight as possible, and stamp out independent movements in different portions of the State, and is not meeting with any great success."[90]

Indeed, the Democrats were facing increasing opposition in the country parishes due in part to the policy of the Democratic administration in Washington. In 1892, Democrat Grover Cleveland won a second, non-consecutive term as President, and Democrats gained majorities in both houses of Congress. Shortly after Cleveland's inauguration, however, the Panic of 1893 set off a severe depression that sent Democratic popularity steadily downhill. Farmers throughout the nation, who were already suffering from low prices and tight credit, saw their incomes fall even further. Then, Cleveland made tight money even tighter when he persuaded Congress to abolish bimetallic backing for the currency (gold plus silver) and adopt a strict gold standard. Small farmers in the Midwest and South were leaving the major parties and fleeing toward the People's Party (the Populists). In Louisiana, the Foster administration was doing nothing to help the small farmers, and the Democratic Party was losing their support.[91]

Louisiana's sugar planters were also hurting because President Cleveland's new tariff bill eliminated the subsidy they had been receiving. Sugar planters broke away from the Democrats and formed the National Republican Party in 1894. Both the Populists and the National Republicans fared poorly in the 1894 elections as many of their candidates were victims of Democratic fraud. Both parties, therefore, favored election reform, and both opposed Governor Foster's policies. A fusion of the two parties' campaigns in 1896 meant that the strength of each could compensate for the weakness of the other: the Republican sugar planters had money to finance a campaign but not many activist supporters. The Populists had plenty of activists but no money. They also complemented each other geographically, with the Populists drawing their support mainly from Northern Louisiana and the Republicans from the south.[92]

These groups began to negotiate a united campaign in November 1895 and agreed to let the Populists choose the major candidates, provided they were all sugar planters. On January 23, 1896, the People's Party chose John N. Pharr for Governor, mainly because he was in favor of free coinage of silver, which was a principal plank in the Populist platform. By February 1896, the Populist-Republican combination was becoming a real threat to the Democrats.[93]

In New Orleans, which counted one-third of the State's voters, the State Democratic organization could not ignore the popularity of the all-too-independent Citizens' League. The Central Committee had already

tried to bring the League under control by informally proposing a fusion of their movement with the Regulars. The League, however, preferred to preserve its independence and to pursue its own goals. To that end, they refused to endorse incumbent Murphy J. Foster or any other candidate for Governor. Although the League was mainly interested in the New Orleans City government, it would also choose to nominate candidates for the State legislature from Orleans Parish because it would need the legislature's approval for its proposed new city charter. The opposition's strength in the countryside had made the New Orleans vote essential for Democratic control of the State government.[94]

Louisiana had not yet adopted the "Australian" secret ballot that let voters choose among all eligible candidates for each post, and each political party still had its own ballot showing only its own candidates. Additionally, under Louisiana law at that time, votes for candidates written in by hand were not counted, which effectively obliged voters to vote straight tickets. However, they could scratch out the names of candidates they did not wish to vote for. Therefore, if New Orleans voters chose League ballots to vote for "clean" City government, they would probably also vote for League candidates for the legislature. Even though most of those League candidates held Democratic views on statewide issues, their independent stance would menace Democratic control of the legislature if they defeated the Regular Democrats in New Orleans.[95]

Throughout the rest of the campaign, the State Central Committee pressed the Orleans Parish Regular Democrats to present an acceptable, clean ticket for the municipal elections. Nevertheless, the Regulars had made little progress on the very eve of their Convention on April 7. Few of the city's prominent Democrats were ready to run for the mayor's office on the same ticket as the Ring's discredited ward leaders, who resisted giving up what they believed to be their rightful places on the ticket. Their first choice for Mayor was New Orleans Congressman Charles F. Buck, who had the necessary spotless reputation, but who initially refused the nomination because he preferred to pursue his Congressional mandate in Washington. Additionally, Buck was not likely to accept the nomination unless he could be convinced that the Regular Democrats would keep their promises to support him with a clean ticket for the City Council and other municipal offices. He finally accepted after "parties high in the councils of the Democratic party" intervened with a barrage of

telegrams, imploring him to return and save the Democratic Party in New Orleans and the State.[96]

Among those high councilors, Edgar H. Farrar was probably one of the most persuasive. Farrar had never before supported the city's Regular Democrats. In fact, for the preceding decade, he had been a forthright opponent of the City Ring and an active supporter of the Reform Democrats. In 1896, however, Farrar was convinced that the Citizens' League's success in New Orleans would seriously threaten Democratic control of the State government and that he must abandon the Citizens' League reformers and try to salvage as many votes as possible for the Regular Democratic Organization. Thus, when Farrar agreed to chair the Regular Democrats' Parish Convention, his solidarity with their leadership surely helped persuade candidate Buck that the Regulars were cleaning up their act. Farrar's installation as Convention Chairman was surely an initiative of the State Central Committee, which was exerting steady pressure on the Regulars to show signs of reform. On a personal level, it seems obvious that State Committee Chairman Ernest B. Kruttschnitt, who was Farrar's law partner, decided to parachute him into this post, where he would serve as a visible representative—or frontman—for the Regulars during the crucial week leading up to the election. Incumbent Mayor Fitzpatrick must then have convinced the Parish committee to overlook Farrar's long-time opposition to the Ring and accept his chairmanship, which, after all, was a temporary post.

To prepare his acceptance by the rank and file, however, Farrar also had to take his place in the ordinary hierarchy of the Party. Just one week before the Convention, he was elected President of the Regular Democrats in his precinct. Since it was the Parish Committee that usually named the officers of precinct posts, Farrar probably faced no opposition to his election. By the time the Convention began, he had become an acceptable candidate for Chairman of that gathering, and few were surprised when the Parish Chairman ceded the chair to him at the very first session.[97]

Edgar H. Farrar was armed with good news when he mounted the Chairman's podium on Tuesday, April 7, 1896. That very morning, he had received Buck's telegram in which he agreed to accept the Regular Democrats' nomination for Mayor. Most of the delegates were aware of Buck's acceptance and waited impatiently as Chairman Farrar expedited the Convention's opening formalities. That accomplished, Farrar

temporarily yielded the chair and moved the nomination of Charles F. Buck as the party's candidate. The motion received wild applause. Several delegates seconded the motion and spoke in Buck's favor. The Convention then approved Buck's nomination by acclamation and adjourned until Thursday. In Buck's telegram, he had stressed that he would run only on a clean ticket. That condition gave Farrar a winning argument to convince Mayor Fitzpatrick that not one of the men tainted by scandal in his outgoing administration must appear on the ballot for the April 18th election. In turn, Fitzpatrick surely used that same argument in the closed caucus that met on Wednesday to choose the Party's candidates.[98]

During Thursday's meeting, Mr. George Flynn made a surprise motion for a white primary election between the Regulars' own list and that of the Citizens' League:

> Whereas we believe that good government, state, parochial and municipal, can best be attained within the ranks of the Democratic party and through the time-honored usages of the party; and
>
> Whereas the time has come for all Democrats to come together in the interest of white civilization and to the end that good government be secured through the instrumentality of the white Democrats of this state and city….
>
> Resolved, That we submit to the organization known as the Citizens' League the following propositions:
>
> First—That an election be agreed upon to be participated in by white Democrats of the city of New Orleans, at which election the two tickets, First, the one nominated by the Citizens League, and, second, the regular Democratic ticket of the city, be submitted to the people for their votes.
>
> Second—That the ticket receiving the majority of votes cast at said election be declared to be the Democratic ticket for the city of New Orleans and pledged to support the Democratic governor and Democratic local and parochial officers; the ticket receiving the minority votes to withdraw from the field.[99]

According to anonymous sources, the foregoing resolution was "hatched" on the morning of April 9 in a meeting of Mayor Fitzpatrick, with his principal assistant, George Flynn, Central Committee Chairman

Ernest Kruttschnitt, and Convention Chairman Edgar Farrar. The white primary proposal had allegedly been cleared with candidate Buck in a telegraphic exchange with Farrar. Since George Flynn was recognized as Mayor Fitzpatrick's spokesman, the delegates approved the motion unanimously, although they knew that the League would reject their proposal.[100]

Following the vote, Chairman Farrar explained that,

> [I]f it was accepted they would show which party held the majority of the white votes, and if rejected which was after the "nigger" votes." Mr. Farrar made use of a term that it would be impossible to publish, and which rather staggered the convention, coming from a man of his standing. The convention seemed in a rather apathetic condition, and nobody had anything to suggest and waited for directions from Mr. Flynn…. He arose and said that as it would be impossible to hear from the Citizens' League at once, and as they were waiting for Mr. Buck, it would be well to adjourn until Monday at 11 o'clock.

Since Farrar was known as an accomplished public speaker, it is unlikely that his inappropriate language was a simple slip of the tongue. By adding an expletive to the word "nigger," was he not trying to show that he was just one of the boys, using the same language as his audience might use in a ward meeting? If Farrar was simply trying to bond with the delegates, the silence that followed his remark showed that he had chosen the wrong language for a Democratic convention.[101]

The delegates left the meeting in a collective daze. The white primary resolution was a complete surprise for everyone—even the ward bosses. The bosses knew the League would refuse a white primary because the proposal had been discussed and abandoned before. Apparently, its purpose was to attract the more racist white voters of New Orleans by demonstrating that the Regular Democratic Organization was more white supremacist than the League. This new racist line was perhaps confusing to some delegates. Before the white primary proposal, the Regulars had welcomed Black voters. In fact, Black support, especially from Black dock-workers unions, had been an important factor in Mayor Fitzpatrick's victory in the 1892 City election. Therefore, the white primary proposal probably came from the State Central Committee. Kruttschnitt and Farrar must have convinced Fitzpatrick that the white

primary proposal would win more white votes for the Regulars than the Black votes they would lose.[102]

Edgar H. Farrar remained the Convention's Chairman on the following Monday, but the man who kept the delegates in line was outgoing Mayor John Fitzpatrick. The first order of business was to review and approve the ballot that party leaders had hashed out during Wednesday's caucus. Most of the ward bosses had already agreed that most incumbents had to retire in favor of clean candidates, but there were still several rebels that Fitzpatrick had to deal with. Once the delegates approved the clean ticket, their candidate for Mayor, Charles F. Buck, made his long-awaited acceptance speech. After a few remarks from Mayor Fitzpatrick, the delegates were ready to go home. Chairman Farrar made them wait, however, with a lengthy speech "preaching white supremacy," denouncing Democrats' rural Populist-Republican adversaries, and recommending a persuasive rather than an aggressive attitude toward their opponents in the Citizens' League.[103]

During these final sessions of the Convention, it had become clear that Chairman Farrar had little or no direct influence over the delegates. As a representative of the State Central Committee, however, he did have considerable influence over Fitzpatrick and thereby helped ensure that the Convention proceeded according to plan. The real power remained with Fitzpatrick and the ward leaders of the city. Farrar was also a symbol representing the Regular Democrats' reform efforts. His reputation and persuasive powers probably helped convince Charles Buck to run for Mayor on the Regulars' ticket; New Orleans voters would not be so easily convinced.

Although the Convention approved a reasonably clean ticket, the State Central Committee did not obtain the Regulars' support for Governor Foster's pet project, the Suffrage Amendment to the State Constitution. In an evening meeting following the Convention, the Regulars' Committee for Orleans Parish voted to have the Parish ballot printed with a "No" for the Suffrage Amendment. This measure would have restricted suffrage by introducing both literacy and property qualifications that were intended to remove Blacks and poor whites from the electorate. But it would also have disenfranchised loyal supporters of the Regular Democrats, the white working men and immigrants of New Orleans. Therefore, the Regulars opposed the Suffrage Amendment, which the State's voters would also reject.[104]

With election day only a week away, the Democrats set their most reputable and gifted orators to the task of rebuilding confidence in the Regulars and discrediting the opposition. Edgar Farrar chose to attack the Citizens' League for elitist attitudes that were not in accord with the people's interests. This was not his easiest line of attack since he was one of the elite himself. His audiences may not have remembered that two years before, he had addressed a Democratic rally dressed in white tie and tails because he had just come from the Opera and had not had time to change. If they had forgotten that incident, they received a clear reminder of his status each time they passed his ostentatious mansion on the busy intersection of St. Charles and Jackson Avenues.[105]

Farrar found a way to overcome that class barrier when he spoke before a mass rally of New Orleans Democrats on April 16. On that occasion, although there were ladies present, he began his speech with an off-color story that the *Times-Democrat* judged not fit to print. Farrar's choice of anecdotes was questionable, but he did succeed in breaking the ice and even drew applause from the crowd as he denounced the elitism of the Citizens' League and stressed the need for unity in the Democratic Party. Despite Farrar's efforts and those of other loyal supporters, the Citizens' League won the New Orleans vote by a wide margin. This reformist wave carried into office not only the League's municipal ticket but also 27 Representatives in the State Assembly. Although the Citizens' League won the City election, the close ties established between the State and the Regular Democratic Organization of New Orleans during the 1896 campaign would help assure Democrat victories in future elections.[106]

Governor Foster carried Orleans Parish by a small margin, and official returns from the rural parishes gave him a statewide majority of nearly 30,000 votes—116,116 votes against 87,698 for his opponent, John N. Pharr. As details of the country vote became available, however, it was clear that much of Foster's majority had come from the usual manipulation of votes in the so-called Black parishes. As a spokesman for Pharr pointed out, "In many cases the votes reported for Foster … exceeded greatly the number of actual voters in the parish…."[107]

Historian Justin A. Nystrom has concisely summarized the situation:

> When skillfully manipulated by Bourbon politicians, stolen black ballots effectively neutralized the electoral threats that periodically emanated from the piney-woods parishes dominated by

poor whites or from discontented urban elites in the metropolis of New Orleans.[108]

In response to their poor showing in the April election, Democratic Party leaders launched an aggressive and openly racist offensive. Rather than casting any blame on the Democratic Central Committee, the editorialists of *The Times-Democrat* wrote, "The source of all our ills is the illiterate, ignorant negro vote," and called for a constitutional convention to correct this supposed weakness in the State's governing institutions. At first glance, this was a curious claim. Was it not the Black vote—stolen or manipulated though it was—that gave the Democrats their supposed victory? Even more curious was the claim that the Black victims of fraud, rather than the white perpetrators, were the guilty parties. But the Democrat strategists were thinking ahead. The success of the Citizens' League in New Orleans showed that the Party could not eternally resist reformers' and Populists' demands for election reform. If such reform made it impossible for white minorities to manipulate or steal Black votes, then Black voters would eventually combine with Republicans or Populists and put an end to the Democrats' dominance and white supremacy in the State. Democratic Party Leaders realized that they would have to follow the examples of South Carolina and Mississippi and eliminate the Black vote. This was the party line that the Democratic Central Committee would adopt at its meeting on May 4, 1896.[109]

Although he was not a regular member of the Central Committee, Edgar Farrar attended the meeting as the proxy for an absent member and took an active role in the Committee's deliberations. As an experienced chairman of political committees, Farrar was known for his skill in bringing politicians to agreement on predetermined conclusions, and that is surely why Chairman Kruttschnitt appointed him to the Special Committee that wrote the Committee's declaration of policy. As it happened, Farrar had already prepared a rough draft of the declaration in which he stressed "the importance of eliminating the negro from the politics of the state." After several hours of discussion and amendment, the Special Committee approved the manifesto, and the Central Committee adopted and published it in the next morning's newspapers under the title, "Address to the White Democracy."[110]

The text evoked standard images of the Lost Cause Myth, such as the massacres of the Haitian revolution, the oppression endured under carpetbag and Black governments, and the pretended Black demands for

social equality. There were also some novel formulations of old ideas to support the Committee's demand for a State constitutional convention:

> No two races as widely divergent as the Caucasian and the negro can live together in political and social equality without complete amalgamation of the two, or complete domination of one by the other. Of the three alternatives, amalgamation, negro domination or white supremacy, the Democratic masses of the south (sic) have chosen the latter….
>
> The Democracy is pledged to a limitation upon suffrage which will eliminate the Senegambian from politics as far as he may be under the Constitution of the United States. Mississippi and South Carolina have set us the example. A futile attempt was made to adopt such an amendment at the last election. It failed through local jealousies and local scramble for office. This result can now be accomplished only by a CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION called while the horror of the situation is still upon us, limited by the call to amending the present constitution as to suffrage and to such other particulars as the legislature may deem advisable to add….[111]

As Farrar read the text to the full Committee, his "remarks in regard to eliminating the negro vote aroused the greatest enthusiasm, and … loud and protracted applause."[112]

The members of the Democratic Central Committee were united in their determination to disfranchise Black voters in Louisiana, and Edgar Howard Farrar had played an important role in forging that unity. The success of their plan, however, would depend on the confirmation of Murphy J. Foster's victory and the consolidation of Democratic majorities in the legislature. Foster's victory would become official only after the new legislature met on May 11 and confirmed the count of the votes in a joint session three days later. Normally, that was a routine procedure, but because of apparent fraud and manipulation in certain parishes, John N. Pharr's supporters demanded that the legislature not only count the returns prepared by the parishes, but also "go behind the returns" and count the actual ballots. If the Democrats could depend on the votes of the Citizens' League legislators, they would hold a majority sufficient to defeat that unusual demand. Although most of the Leaguers were Democrats, their support for the Party's white supremacy platform

was uncertain because the League had welcomed the Black vote in New Orleans and had not supported the Suffrage Amendment. Besides, the League had its own reform agenda, which might not appeal to other Democrats.[113]

The main issue between the Democrats and the League revolved around their goals for the proposed constitutional convention. Some Democrats, particularly those in the majority Black parishes, opposed any constitutional convention due to concerns that suffrage reform would undermine their ability to influence the Black vote. Most Democrats preferred a convention focused solely on suffrage issues. However, the Citizens' League advocated for an open convention because they had additional reforms they wanted to propose. After the legislature convened on May 11, the League was dissatisfied with the concessions offered by the Democrats and sent a delegation to Governor Foster to seek his commitment to support an open constitutional convention and the adoption of the Australian secret ballot. The Governor initially declined, but realizing he might need the League's votes to confirm his reelection, he ultimately agreed to support any measures approved by a majority of the Democrats in the legislature, including those who were League members. This was less of a commitment than the League had hoped for, but only eight of the 27 Citizens' League legislators opposed the Governor, whose reelection was confirmed by a vote of 87 to 47 on May 14.[114]

Next in the order of business was the election of a U.S. Senator. In this drawn-out contest, the League demonstrated its independence by negotiating the support of the Populist-Republicans for their candidate, Walter Denegre. He then came within eight votes of victory on the fourth ballot, which was too close for the Democrats. They persuaded their two original candidates to withdraw in favor of former Governor Samuel D. McEnery, who was elected on May 28 by a two-vote margin.[115]

For the next three weeks, negotiations continued over the competence of the proposed constitutional convention, with the League and the Populist-Republicans in favor of an open convention and the Democrats in favor of a restricted convention. The Democratic Caucus named a committee of 15, which produced a rough draft of a bill on June 10, and Governor Foster recommended this draft in a message to the legislature on June 24. The Leaguers finally realized that the Democrats would not vote to approve the League's new City Charter for New

Orleans unless the League voted for their bill for a restricted constitutional convention. After the League had joined the Democrats in voting for their Convention, Election, and Registration bills, the Democrats joined the League in approving their City Charter bill on July 1, 1896.[116]

The Convention Bill asked voters to approve a constitutional convention and choose delegates for that convention to be held early in 1898. The text approved by the convention would be final and would not be submitted to the voters. The Elections bill introduced the Australian secret ballot—a reform that the League had long advocated—but failed to provide any measures to help illiterate voters mark their ballots. The new Registration bill required voters to register anew after January 1, 1897, and gave registrars complete discretion as to whom they might accept or exclude from the registers. In 1897, voters approved the Constitutional Convention by a vote of 36,178 to 7,578. The total vote had declined from 206,354 in the April 1896 election to 43,756 a year later due to a combination of obstacles to registration and the inability of Black and white illiterates to interpret the new Australian ballot. Additionally, there was probably a certain indifference among voters who figured that the Registration and Election laws had already settled the question of election reform.[117]

When the delegates met to write the new Constitution in February 1898, Chairman Kruttschnitt greeted them with the superfluous reminder that they had come "to eliminate from the electorate the mass of the corrupt and illiterate voters who have during the last quarter of a century degraded our politics." Surely the Chairman would have been less discreet in his opening statement if the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution had not forbidden the direct disfranchisement of Black voters, and the work of the delegates would have been much easier. During the next three months, however, the delegates would change their minds so often and produce so many convoluted clauses that the press gave them more criticism than applause. In his final defense of the Convention's work, Kruttschnitt was much more direct than in his opening speech: "Doesn't it meet the case? Doesn't it let the white man vote, and doesn't it stop the negro from voting, and isn't that what we came here for?" Indeed, the new Constitution mandated that for registration, a prospective voter had to be literate in English or his mother tongue or possess property valued at $300 or more. However, a grandfather clause allowed those whose fathers or grandfathers were eligible to vote before January 1, 1867, to be exempt from the literacy and property

requirements if they registered by September 1, 1898. Thus, the Constitution provided poor white voters with a three-month grace period to preserve their right to vote. Foreseeing that a majority of Blacks would eventually learn to read despite minimal State education budgets, the delegates also enacted a poll tax of one dollar per year, which was inconvenient and burdensome for those who struggled to make a living.[118]

By the time the legislature convened in May 1896, Edgar H. Farrar had returned to the political neutrality of his law practice, while his partner, Ernest B. Kruttschnitt, carried on his work on the political front. Although Farrar had intervened only briefly in the Democratic Central Committee meeting of May 5, 1896, the manifesto that the Committee had written under his guidance expressed the essence of Democratic policy for the next two years. Skillfully maneuvered, a fraction of the electorate had managed to disfranchise nearly all of the State's Black voters and many poor and illiterate white voters as well. Edgar Howard Farrar had apparently forgotten the prediction he had made during the Anti-Lottery campaign:

> If you attempt to run a democracy and an oligarchy together, the oligarchy will swallow up the democracy. It has always been so throughout the history of the world.

When the Citizens' League began its election campaign in 1896, the New Orleans reformers had surely been disappointed and surprised that Edgar Howard Farrar did not join them. Farrar had always been with them in their recurrent campaigns against the New Orleans Ring, the Louisiana Lottery, and even the phantomatic Italian Mafia. In 1896, however, he had foreseen the possibility that the Populist-Republicans might win the State election, which he considered a danger greater than another victory by the Ring in New Orleans. As we have seen, the Democrats did come very close to losing the State.

The Cross of Gold

After the Democratic Central Committee meeting in May 1896, Edgar Farrar went back to work. Somebody had to take care of their law office while his partner, Ernest Kruttschnitt, was fully occupied with State politics. During the spring, Louisiana newspaper headlines fixed public

attention on the maneuvers in the State legislature. Still, it was clear to those who read the inside pages that a massive wave in favor of free silver had been building throughout the West and South during the final weeks of May. In one State after another, Democrats chose delegates pledged to a free-silver platform and a free-silver candidate at the National Convention in Chicago. This trend soon began to worry Edgar Farrar, who saw the gold standard as indispensable for a sound economy.

As the November elections would prove, most Louisiana voters agreed with William Jennings Bryan and the Populists who blamed the gold standard for the tight money policies and monetary deflation that had prolonged the depression and forced many farmers and other debtors into poverty. In Louisiana, falling cotton prices hurt the worst. After undulating between 9 cents and 12 cents per pound during the 1880s, cotton prices on the New York market trended downward to less than 6 cents per pound in 1894. Small farmers were obliged to grow cotton if they wanted to obtain credit from their local suppliers. Since local stores were often in a monopolistic position, they were unlikely to pass on lower prices to their clients or offer them lower interest rates. Farmers and small businessmen were hoping that an increased money supply would lead to increased income. Such hopes were probably in vain. While an inflated currency might have provided some relief to debtors, the price of cotton was decided in world markets, where the United States' monetary and fiscal policy would have little influence.[119]

During the spring campaign for Louisiana State offices, the Democrats' leadership had supported the gold standard in opposition to Populist demands for free coinage of silver, but the issue had not been central to their campaign. Nevertheless, there were several leading Democrats, such as Senator Donelson Caffery, who were convinced that the nation must adhere to the gold standard to maintain a sound currency. Shortly before the National Convention, these "sound money men" were placed in an awkward position as an enthusiastic majority of Louisiana Democrats joined the rising silver tide.[120]

When the State Democratic Convention met at Baton Rouge on June 15, it was a foregone conclusion that the free-silver delegates would control the National Convention. As expected, the State Convention voted to bind the Louisiana delegates to support a platform of free coinage of silver at a ratio of 16 to 1 and a free silver candidate for President. This result had evidently been negotiated in advance, as there

were only two opposing votes, including that of Central Committee Chairman Ernest B. Kruttschnitt. When he presented his minority report, however, Mr. Kruttschnitt pledged to submit loyally to the majority's decision. Thus, it appeared that the Louisiana Democrats might avoid a serious split over the free silver issue.[121]

The first sign of a fracture in the national party appeared among the Illinois Democrats. On July 10, even as delegates were preparing to nominate William Jennings Bryan by acclamation, the Illinois sound money men announced their decision:

> Resolved, By the sound money Democrats of Illinois that we are in favor of the calling of a national convention of the Democratic party of the United States for the purpose of nominating Democratic candidates for the offices of President and Vice President of the United States upon a Democratic platform, and to that end we invite the advice and cooperation of the sound money Democrats of the other States of the Union….[122]

On July 22, 1896, representatives of the sound money men who had responded to this invitation met in Chicago. Only 11 states—not including Louisiana—were represented at this meeting. Nevertheless, the group issued a formal call to form a National Democratic Party and to hold a convention in Indianapolis on September 2, 1896. By August 17, the Executive Committee of the new party had recruited enough activists nationwide that they were able to confirm their call for delegates to their national convention. This left the National Democrats little more than two weeks to prepare their convention. In the Northeast, state-level organization was well underway, but in Louisiana, the party did not even announce its existence until August 20. As early as July 30, their acknowledged leader, Senator Donelson Caffery, had proclaimed that he opposed free silver and Bryan's candidacy. The State's other sound money men, however, were waiting to see what the State Party leadership would do before they displayed their true colors.[123]

During the Democratic Central Committee meeting of August 13, Chairman Ernest B. Kruttschnitt—a known sound money man—submitted his resignation, which the Committee refused to accept. The Committee proposed that Kruttschnitt retain his position but that a special sub-committee of free silver advocates be named to direct the statewide campaign. Kruttschnitt accepted this arrangement. Governor

Foster then rose and declared his support for the regular party candidate and platform: "Whatever my individual views may be, I am a Democrat, and as long as I am a Democrat, I will always believe in the wisdom of the majority of my party." The *Picayune* noted that the Governor had recently shaved off his beard, thereby identifying visibly with the clean-shaven William Jennings Bryan.[124]

Once the Governor and the Democratic Central Committee had come out firmly in support of Bryan and free silver, the gold standard Democrats of Louisiana had to make a hard decision. Should they follow Chairman Kruttschnitt's example and keep their mouths shut in order to preserve party unity? Or should they stand on principle as Senator Donelson Caffery was about to do and bolt from the Party? On August 20, 1896, the National Democratic Party summoned all sound money Democrats of Louisiana to gather in New Orleans on August 27 to elect delegates to the National Convention of their new party on September 2. Attached to this call were 60 names headed by Senator Caffery and followed by the city's foremost bankers, brokers, lawyers, and others of the business elite. Casting aside his concern for party unity, Edgar Farrar threw himself into the effort to organize the Louisiana supporters of the gold standard. Citizens' League President Charles Janvier worked with Farrar even though they had taken opposite sides in the recent City elections. By August 24, they had made little progress, as only half the city's wards were represented at their first meeting. Three days later, however, the new party's leaders filled the Odd Fellows Hall to standing-room-only. Senator Caffery, as permanent Chairman of the Convention, spoke in support of the gold standard. Caffery defended the supposed intrinsic value of gold as a measure of value: "From one substance to another. mankind has progressed through a series of evolutions to the adoption and use of the most superior substance to measure values."[125]

He was more persuasive when he affirmed that bimetallism was impossible:

> Whenever the law attempts to compel the circulation of any two metals of different values at an arbitrary ratio, and one or the other falls below that ratio. as one or the other will always fall, the cheaper metal will drive out the superior or dearer, and this upon the common sense principle (which sustains Gresham's law) that no man will pay 100 cents. when 90 cents, or any less number, will answer.… So bimetallism is really monometallism—

> not stable monometallism—but a changing and uncertain monometallism.[126]

Indeed, even the limited silver purchases required under the Sherman Silver Purchase Act had led to a flight of gold from the treasury and fears for the collapse of the dollar. Congress repealed the Act in 1893. It is difficult to deny that a gold standard was a practical necessity at that time since the world's industrialized nations had all adopted it.[127]

Proponents of the system, however, refused to acknowledge that the international gold standard could render the United States overly susceptible to financial panics that originated in foreign countries and that its rigidity hindered the United States in adjusting the national and local money supply to changing needs. Unfortunately, no serious banking reform was undertaken until another crisis in 1907 prompted Congress to establish the National Monetary Commission, whose recommendations led to the creation of the Federal Reserve System in 1913. (See Chapter 11, sub-section: The Pujo Committee.)

Edgar Farrar also spoke to the convention, and his criticisms of the Regular Democrats' platform were well received in the conservative business community. The Regular Democrats proposed withdrawing the power of the National Banks to issue bank notes and granting the Federal government a monopoly on currency issuance. Farrar claimed that this was "an assault on the banking institutions of the country, and virtually calls for their abolition." He also denied that the Federal government had the power to issue paper money despite the Supreme Court's 1884 decision that upheld that power.

William Jennings Bryan defended the plank in his "Cross of Gold" speech:

> We say in our platform that we believe that the right to coin and issue money is a function of government. We believe it. We believe that it is a part of sovereignty, and can no more with safety be delegated to private individuals than we could afford to delegate to private individuals the power to make penal statutes or levy taxes. Mr. Jefferson, who was once regarded as good Democratic authority, seems to have differed in opinion from the gentleman who has addressed us on the part of the minority. Those who are opposed to this proposition tell us that the issue of paper money is a function of the bank, and that the Government

> ought to go out of the banking business. I stand with Jefferson rather than with them, and tell them, as he did, that the issue of money is a function of government, and that the banks ought to go out of the governing business.[128]

The proposals in the Chicago platform were ahead of their time. Except for bimetallism, the major planks of that platform would all be adopted enthusiastically in the following decades. The National Banks, however, would continue to issue banknotes in decreasing quantities until 1935, when Congress restricted the power to issue currency to the Federal Reserve Banks and the Federal Treasury.[129]

Farrar also pretended that two planks in the Democrats' Chicago platform, if enacted by Congress, would seriously weaken the nation's judicial system. One of these proposals was to eliminate lifetime appointments to government offices to enable a more frequent renewal of Supreme Court and other Federal judges. A majority of the Chicago delegates would have sent the most conservative Supreme Court Justices into retirement as soon as possible, particularly those who, in 1895, had voted to declare the Federal income tax to be unconstitutional. Although Farrar favored the income tax, he opposed shortening the Justices' tenure in order to change the Court's decision. Farrar believed that lifetime appointments of judges were necessary to protect their independence of judgment. Because that dogma has rarely been seriously disputed, the income tax became possible only after the passage of the Sixteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1913.[130]

Farrar was also against any law restraining the Federal Courts' powers to issue anti-strike injunctions. Progressive Democrats had inserted a plank in the Chicago platform favoring such a law because they believed that the Courts had issued unjustified anti-strike injunctions on behalf of large corporations. This controversy peaked during the Pullman strike of 1894 when the Federal government obtained an injunction obliging railroad strikers to return to work because they were blocking mail distribution. Union President Eugene V. Debs refused to end the strike and received a six-month sentence in prison for contempt of court; the Supreme Court unanimously upheld his conviction. Farrar and other corporate lawyers welcomed and supported this decision. Anti-strike injunctions continued to hinder labor union progress until the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932 prevented Federal Courts from issuing them against non-violent strikes.[131]

> The most compelling slogan in the campaign leading up to this statute was the cry of "government by injunction," which exemplified the feeling of all classes of responsible citizens that federal judges through their equity powers were wielding a control over the activities of private groups without the guidance or restraint of law. Too many citizens feared the continuance of an uncontrolled judicial device which circumvented the constitutional guaranties of due process and fair trial in cases where admittedly illegal conduct had occurred and which side-stepped all law whatsoever when only economic coercion was involved.[132]

The New Orleans "gold bugs" chose a 16-man delegation to the National Democrats' convention that met as scheduled in Indianapolis and nominated Senator John Palmer of Illinois for President. Senator Caffery was Permanent Chairman of the Convention, and Edgar Farrar was a member of the Policy Committee that wrote a platform in line with the speeches he and Caffery had made in New Orleans.[133]

Back home in Louisiana, the National Democrats' leading orators were out on the stump for Palmer by the end of September. Party Chairman Caffery and campaign Committee Chairman Farrar spoke in small cities around the countryside. They received little support outside of New Orleans. Some local newspapers ridiculed the Party's speakers, treating them with epithets such as "yellow Democrats" or headlining their rallies as meetings of "The Republican Comfort Club." Farrar's speeches did not show any of the down-to-earth touches that he had used during the spring campaign in New Orleans. Instead, he adopted a professorial style that made many listeners feel he was talking down to them. The *Times-Picayune* supported the Gold Democrats, and their reports were consistently favorable; nevertheless, they occasionally admitted that Farrar's audiences were not convinced. Even the Party's candidates for President and Vice President were heckled when they spoke before an open-air meeting of several thousand in New Orleans on October 17. Edgar Farrar, who opened the meeting, had the police expel three or four rowdies, after which Senator Palmer handled serious questions and comments with aplomb.[134]

Although McKinley and the Republicans carried the Nation on November 3, Bryan and the Regular Democrats won Louisiana by a wide margin. The National (Gold) Democrats received less than 1% of the national vote and only 1.82% in Louisiana—1834 votes in all.

Donelson remained active in the National Democratic Party until it dissolved in 1900 and retired from political life at the end of his Senate term in 1901. Although Edgar Farrar had not sought elective office since 1880, he had been influential in State Democratic councils. Following his adventure with the "Gold" Democrats, that influence appears to have waned. Surely, neither man had expected victory, but neither had imagined that the electorate would so massively reject their fondly held principles.[135]

Fame, Fortune, and Taxation

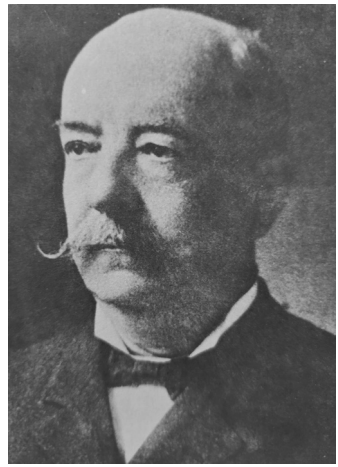
It was about time for Farrar to return to his law practice. Benjamin F. Jonas had joined the firm as a partner after his retirement from the Senate, and Hewes T. Gurley, the son of distinguished jurist John Ward Gurley, was also working with the firm. Both were capable lawyers, but neither had yet shown the ability that had brought Farrar and Kruttschnitt to the peak of their profession.[136]

Farrar's biographer, Henry Dart, claimed ignorance of their income, but agreed with the consensus of the New Orleans Bar:

> [T]hey were considered to be great fee-makers. Their office was in its early period about the largest, and certainly quite the most expensive then in New Orleans. They were retained by powerful clients; they represented various trans-continental railroads; they were connected with the street railway system. They had an admiralty and equity practice, the envy of less fortunate lawyers, and they had clients in the great financial centers of the country, who kept them constantly occupied. Their retainers carried them into all parts of the United States and they necessarily must have been great money-earners.[137]

Such an active and lucrative practice required the constant attention of at least one of the senior partners. Kruttschnitt could resume this role during the 1896 presidential campaign, in which he did not take an active role. After the November elections, however, Farrar soon returned to his law office and took on an increasing share of the workload as Kruttschnitt prepared for his role as Chairman of the 1898 State Constitutional Convention.

Ernest B. Kruttschnitt died on April 16, 1906, one day short of his 54th birthday, and Jonas died in 1911. Abraham Goldberg, Farrar's protegé from Tensas Parish, capably filled the void and became a full partner in 1908. Richard F. Goldsborough, who married Farrar's daughter Anna in 1904, spent much of his time in New York but finally became a partner in 1910. The firm became Farrar, Goldberg and Dufour in 1916 when prominent attorney H. Generes Dufour joined them. The partners also needed increasing support from anonymous junior lawyers and stenographers who required more office space; by 1905, the growing firm had moved from their modest four rooms at 35 Carondelet Street to the Hennen Building, 800 Common Street, New Orleans's first skyscraper—11 stories—in 1895, and to a suite in the Hibernia Bank building at 226 Carondelet by 1905.[138]



Edgar Howard Farrar, about 1910.

At the turn of the century, Edgar Howard Farrar was temporarily absent from the New Orleans reform movement. By 1896, he had realized that the State Democratic Party needed a strong Democratic Organization in New Orleans to win statewide elections by solid margins. Farrar had foreseen that a Citizens' League victory in 1896 would threaten Democratic domination in Louisiana, which is surely the reason he deserted the New Orleans reformers in that election campaign. In any case, the Citizens' League failed to build a solid political organization after their victory in 1896, and they lost the 1900 City elections to a Regular Democratic Organization revitalized around their new central node, the Choctaw Club.

In 1904, Newton C. Blanchard was elected Governor of Louisiana. Although Blanchard may be considered a reformer, he did not endear himself to his ilk in New Orleans due to his interference in city politics. He was not only reform-minded but also an experienced politician who could get things done. He convinced the legislators to more than double their appropriations for primary and secondary education. Blanchard was also concerned about the inequality of the State's taxation system. In response to his recommendation, the legislature created the State Board

of Equalization and a special Tax Commission to recommend measures for further improvement. Governor Blanchard appointed Edgar H. Farrar Chairman of that Commission.

The Commission presented its Report to a Joint Committee of the legislature on June 9, 1908. Farrar prefaced the Report with his typically dramatic language:

> Pretermitting for the present, consideration of other defects in our present system, we are already in a position to say, that the provisions of the Constitution requiring uniformity and equality in taxation are a delusion; that the most solemn declaration that property shall be assessed and taxed at its full value is not enforced, that the greatest inequality prevails, that some parishes pay two and others three times as high a rate of taxes for State purposes as other parishes, and it must be manifest that this open and flagrant violation of law must have a most pernicious effect in many ways, and no self-respecting people can permit conditions of that kind to exist-after it has knowledge of them.
>
> That the fundamental principle to be adopted in any new system of taxation shall be the separation of State from local taxation as to sources of revenue. We mean by this that the State shall levy its taxes on certain specific objects of taxation, and the parishes and municipal corporations shall levy their taxes on certain other specific objects of taxation so that the property taxed by the State shall not be taxed by the parishes and municipalities and the property taxed by the parishes and municipalities shall not be taxed by the State, except that both should have the power to levy taxes or licenses or both on things that fall under the domain of the police power.[139]

The Commission recommended that the following objects of taxation be reserved to the State:

- Property taxes on railways, telephone and telegraph companies, pipeline companies, and general transportation companies.
- Other taxes on corporations, except property taxes.
- Stamp taxes on financial transactions.

- An inheritance tax.
- Excise taxes on the sale of liquor, drugs, tobacco, etc.

All other property would be subject to local taxation. The Commission continued with seven pages of specific recommendations on the details of State and local taxation. Finally, the Report noted that a constitutional convention or constitutional amendments would probably be required to enact the report's recommendations.[140]

The legislature was unable to consider the question of tax reform in its regular session and recommended a special session to consider the Tax Commission's Report. The next Governor, Jared Sanders, elected in May 1908, did not call for a special session and left the Commission's recommendations hanging in the air. Edgar Farrar detested Sanders, whose inaction probably contributed to that sentiment. In 1910, Farrar took the lead in organizing the Good Government League of Louisiana. As temporary Chairman of the League, Farrar participated in drafting its Platform, which urged "The overthrow of political machine rule which has taken from the people the substance of Democratic government and left them only the shadow." The elite New Orleans reformers experienced yet another rebirth, but this time at the State level, with the Choctaw Cub machine as its foe. The Good Government League would continue to harass Governor Sanders throughout the rest of his term.[141]

After the spring election of 1912, the new Governor, Luther E. Hall, renewed the call for reform of the State tax system. Based on their previous experience, the legislators recognized they would not have the time to address the complex question of a Constitutional amendment during their regular session. Instead, the legislature created a Tax Commission charged with drafting that amendment. Edgar H. Farrar was appointed Chairman toward the end of July. This left little time to prepare the text because the amendment had to be placed on the ballot at least 60 days before the November 5 elections. This meant the Commission faced a hot summer deadline of August 20 to finish the amendment's text and the supporting arguments. Under Farrar's able and informed direction, the Commission completed its task a week ahead of time. The result was not a hasty assemblage of boilerplate text but rather the product of study and debate led by Edgar Farrar and other experts since the appointment of the first Tax Commission eight years before. The Governor submitted the Commission's text to a joint

session of the legislature on August 12, thus beating its deadline by more than a week.[142]

The amendment proposed to segregate taxation by reserving entities of statewide and regional importance for State taxation. Such entities included banks, insurance companies, railroads, petroleum companies, mines, and sugar mills. All other property appraisal and taxation would remain with local entities, and the State would compensate parishes and municipalities that might lose revenue due to the segregation. Special taxes, such as those for roads, schools, and levees, would remain in effect. A State Tax Commission would be created to assess State-taxed property. After lengthy debates, the text passed the legislature on August 24, 1912.[143]

Although the Tax Commission and the Governor led a month-long campaign of public "education," the voters rejected the tax reform amendment and related measures in the November 5 election. A common complaint among voters was that they were not given enough time to study the complex issues involved. The main problem, indeed, was the complexity of the measure, which few but the experts could understand. Although a Tax Reform Association had presented detailed estimates showing that local governments would not lose any revenues at existing rates, many taxpayers did not understand what would happen to their personal tax bills and therefore voted against the amendment.[144]

This was a bitter disappointment for Edgar Farrar, who had worked for this reform at every opportunity for more than eight years. Following the defeat of the amendment, he is supposed to have declared, "Well, you younger men take up the fight. All my life I have worked for the people for nothing and now I'm through. Let 'em stew." Thereafter, Farrar was frequently consulted on future efforts to improve the tax system, but no longer took a leading role in these efforts.[145]

In 1916, Governor Ruffin Pleasant proposed that the State take over the assessment of all property for State affairs, and let the parishes and municipalities manage local taxation as they wished. The legislature prepared an amendment to the Constitution that provided for a Board of State Affairs that would assess all property in the State that was subject to taxation and prepare the State budget for approval by the legislature. The voters readily approved this straightforward proposition, which enabled the State to upgrade its financial management. In 1921, during the administration of Governor John M. Parker, the voters approved a

new State Constitution that allowed the legislature to enact the following measures:

- A classified property tax.
- An income tax.
- A business tax.
- An inheritance tax.
- A tax on the gross earnings of public service corporations.
- A severance tax on the value of natural resources extracted.
- A centralized tax administration.[146]

Thus, before his death, Edgar Farrar had the satisfaction of seeing the State adopt a Constitution that enabled the enactment of all the improvements he had recommended 13 years before.

National Reform

After the 1896 spring elections, Edgar Howard Farrar had done as much as he could to "purify" Louisiana politics. The Black vote was effectively eliminated in Louisiana, as in most of the other Southern states. Farrar and others of the Southern elite could then devote themselves to reforms for white people. Apart from Jim Crow legislation, Southern politics was taking a sharply progressive turn thanks to William Jennings Bryan, who had again received the Democratic nomination for President in 1900. Although Farrar continued to detest Bryan and would later write him a letter telling him as much, he agreed with him on at least one subject—the evils of plutocracy and its danger for democracy.[147]

In June 1902, he spoke to alumni of his alma mater, the University of Virginia, on the importance of A Remedy for Plutocracy. For some in his audience, this was a radical idea, but he reassured them with his introductory praise for the heroic veterans of the War Between the States and their descendants:

> The problems that came to them in their declining years, and to you in the vigor of young manhood, were to build up a wasted country, to revivify a perished commerce, to reorganize upon a new basis a destroyed society, to adjust in its proper place a once servile and inferior race, who, by the chicanery of politicians and the hypocritical snivel of sham philanthropists, had been placed

> with their heels upon your necks, to recover those rights of political and civil liberty taken from you by the angry passions of civic strife, to heal the gaping wounds caused by that strife, and to resume your hereditary place in the federal galaxy as the descendants of the men who had proclaimed the Declaration of Independence, and had with their blood and their fortunes established its principles as a common heritage for all their posterity.[148]

Once he had placed himself clearly on the side of the Lost Cause and Jim Crow, his audience of Southerners was ready to listen. Farrar then approached his subject gradually by praising the virtues of the American Republic in contrast to the evils of aristocracy. Then, he awakened the assembly with a dramatic pivot to the subject of his speech:

> But there is a congener of aristocracy, which springs from the same root, which is made fertile by the same conditions, which bears many of the same characteristics and which is a growth much more hostile and harmful to liberty. We call that foul weed plutocracy. It is the noxious form which aristocracy takes among a free, rich and prosperous people. It arrays itself at first with the wreath and toga of simplicity, but its progress to the crown and purple is eager and rapid.… But the sphere where its power is to be dreaded, and not turned into ridicule, is that it tends to monopolize the nation's property, industries and sources of wealth, and to corrupt both the suffragans and the lawmakers of the land.…
>
> The problem that confronts us today, and that will confront our descendants for generations, is how to check this plutocratic growth.…
>
> We cannot, … consistently with the principles of liberty, legislate so as to prohibit the accumulation of wealth by honest individual effort, but we can legislate consistently with those principles in two ways: first, so as to destroy the privileges out of which most of the great existing fortunes have grown; second, so as to prevent wealth from being hereditarily piled up in a few hands, so as to disperse it in accordance with the operation of nature's laws, and so as to keep it in commerce and out of the dead hand of the family compact and of the trust estate.[149]

The elimination of privileges that lead to unequal and unmerited incomes was, and remains, a never-ending task. In any case, Farrar chose in this speech to address himself to the second aspect of the problem. His recommendations for inheritance legislation were:

- To eliminate entails, that is, testamentary provisions that require spreading inheritances over several generations.
- To prohibit every form of estate trusts.
- To eliminate primogeniture.
- Insofar as possible, to eliminate discretionary wills and require equal distribution of assets among descendants or ascendants at the same level.[150]

Farrar justified these proposals with a lengthy exposition of legal and historical precedents. He wound up his speech by citing the dangers of the enormous concentrations of wealth that had accumulated in banks and trust companies in New York and other money centers, and the potential political power this gave to the institutions that held these funds.[151]

Essentially, Farrar was recommending that the principles of Louisiana's inheritance laws, derived from the Napoleonic code, be strengthened and applied nationwide. A century later, these proposals seem timid in the face of mega-fortunes that could pose an even greater threat to Western democracy. Still, there were many in his audience who balked at the idea of any restrictions on what they could do with their personal wealth.

Farrar's thinking on economic affairs continued to evolve over the next few years. In 1906, Congress passed the Hepburn Act, which gave the Interstate Commerce Commission the power to regulate rates charged by railroads and other systems of transportation. Despite the importance of railroads among his firm's clients, Farrar took a position solidly in favor of regulation:

> In 1907 he addressed an open letter to President Theodore Roosevelt advancing the contention that under the post roads clause in the Constitution the Congress had full power to enact laws which could control railroads whether interstate or otherwise. The open letter roused both political parties and created a storm of discussion in all parts of the country.[152]

In response, Farrar prepared a pamphlet that was later read into the Congressional Record and subsequently became the basis of accepted jurisprudence on that question. Farrar also agreed wholeheartedly with President Theodore Roosevelt's trust-busting measures. In his address as President of the American Bar Association in 1911, he spoke on the problems of regulating large corporations:

> Under the power to create corporations with unlimited capital stock, … great aggregations of capital have been formed which have seized upon specific industries and driven everybody else out of them.…
>
> The economic advantages, if any, that flow from these vast aggregations of capital, are drowned in the firm belief that they exercise too much political power, that they exercise such power selfishly and unscrupulously, that they bar the door to private enterprises, blight local industries, cramp the industrial freedom of individuals, destroy equality of opportunity and extinguish all hope and hence all ambition for industrial independence and autonomy.…
>
> But the great American national disgrace is found in the issuance of fictitious or watered stock. This is made possible by those corporation laws which provide no governmental supervision over the organization of corporations, which require no part of the capital stock to be paid in money, and which permit the issuance of stock at the pleasure of the organizers and directors for property, labor and services at such valuations as they may choose to place on them.[153]

While Farrar believed that the Federal government should exercise its power to regulate corporations engaged in interstate commerce, he showed a nagging reluctance to see the States relinquish their rights to regulate economic agents. As a Southerner, he would have preferred that the States get together and tackle the problems of corporate governance:

> Is there a remedy for all these evils? Manifestly, there is, and it lies in the source from which the evils have sprung, that is, in modifying the corporation laws of the various states. Concerted action among the states will end all the trouble. If every state in

> the Union will purge its corporation laws of all objectionable features, then the breeding places of industrial monstrosities are destroyed. If every state under whose laws these monstrosities have been brought into being will exercise its reserved power over corporations and compel them either to conform to the new regime or to dissolve and liquidate, then the existing crop will be destroyed without hope of successors.… It appears to me that it would require but a small amount of constructive statesmanship to bring about a state conference and united action on this grave subject.[154]

In fact, the separate states had already begun to act. Between 1911 and 1913, a total of 24 States adopted laws to prevent the sale of fraudulent securities. Of these statutes, known as the "blue-sky" laws, only 12 provided for a review of the securities' merits before issuance. The others called for administrative review for potential or actual fraud with varying power to prevent issuance of securities. By 1931, 47 of the 48 States had enacted "blue-sky" laws, but these laws differed so widely from one State to another that there was little hope that State laws would lead to the effective nationwide regime that Farrar recommended.[155]

In 1914, Congress provided a partial solution at the national level when it established the Federal Trade Commission with the task of preventing fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices. The Federal government, however, did not regulate the sale of securities until the stock market crash of 1929 prompted Congress to pass the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

The Pujo Committee

In 1907, a Wall Street financial crisis threatened a meltdown of the U.S. economy. A recession followed, but financier J.P. Morgan prevented disaster by raising funds from other bankers in New York and other financial centers to support the liquidity of troubled institutions. Businessmen praised Morgan for organizing this rescue, but Progressive reformers were alarmed at this evidence of the power that big money-center banks could exercise over the economy. One of these reformers, Congressman Charles A. Lindberg Sr. of Minnesota, father of the aviator, introduced a resolution to investigate the nation's banks and other finan-

cial institutions, which he condemned as "the Money Trust…the most sinister trust of all."[156]

The House Speaker was not keen for such an investigation, but after Wall Street, celebrity lawyer Samuel Untermeyer made dramatic accusations against the "Money Trust," the pressure rose for Congress to act. On the evening of December 27, 1911, Untermeyer spoke at the New York City YMCA:

> If … we mean by this loose, elastic term "trust" as applied to the concentration of the "Money Power," that there is a close and well-defined "community of interest" and understanding among the men who dominate the financial destinies of our country and who wield fabulous power over the fortunes of others through their control of corporate funds belonging to other people, our investigators will find a situation confronting us more serious than is popularly supposed to exist.…[157]

On February 24, 1912, the House authorized a Sub-Committee of the Committee on Money and Banking to investigate the so-called Money Trust; Louisiana Congressman Arsène Pujo was named Chairman. The Pujo Committee was slow to begin its investigation because Pujo had to return to Louisiana due to the illness of his wife. While there, he planned to consult with Edgar H. Farrar, his supposed favorite for the Committee's legal counsel. Farrar probably had reservations about increasing Federal government control over private banking, but realized that something had to be done. In November 1911, Farrar had aired a proposal for interstate agreements to establish a reserve system for state-chartered banks. Again, Farrar showed a preference for State rather than federally managed solutions. Nevertheless, in April 1912, when attorney Samuel Untermeyer accepted the position of legal Counsel for the Pujo Committee, Farrar agreed to act as Assistant Counsel. On April 29, the Committee finally got to work and sent detailed inquiries to 30,000 National and State banks throughout the country.[158]

Unfortunately, many banks—probably a majority—refused to cooperate on the pretense that their responses would require them to divulge confidential and sensitive information on their own or their clients' accounts. Congress refused to modify the law to force the banks to respond, so the Committee was obliged to satisfy itself with the considerable information available in the public domain. The information they

gathered supported Untermeyer's contention that New York City was the center of a gigantic money trust. Thus, the Committee began its public hearings by questioning officials of the New York Clearing House, which it suspected of unfairly restricting smaller banks' direct access to the clearing of checks. Early in July, the Committee paused its investigation for the duration of the election campaign.[159]

By November 20, 1912, when the Committee returned from its election recess, it was clear that they were not going to receive all the banking information they needed to complete their investigation. The banks had refused their full cooperation, and their supervisory authority, the Comptroller of the Currency, also refused to supply information on the National Banks under their jurisdiction. Nor was the lame duck administration of President Taft willing to cooperate. Additionally, there were rumors of dissension among Committee members and their counsel. In these circumstances, it was not surprising that Edgar H. Farrar resigned as Assistant Counsel when the Committee went back to work.[160]

Despite the rumors of dissension, it is unlikely that Farrar and Untermeyer differed on the basic issues. Of course, during the 1896 election, Farrar was seen as a monetary conservative due to his energetic defense of the National Banking System and the gold standard. Since then, however, he had shown himself to be a firm opponent of monopolies. Thus, he was open to the possibility that a Money Trust was restricting the availability of financial resources to deserving companies. There may have been tactical differences between the two men, but Farrar would hardly object to Untermeyer's aggressive interrogation of witnesses because he was also known for his own aggressive style of cross-examination. It is more likely that Farrar resigned because he believed the Committee would not be able to obtain sufficient information to prove its case due to the banks' and the administration's refusal to cooperate. Farrar probably also felt that his talent was being wasted; records of the early hearings show that Untermeyer was handling all the interrogation, and Farrar's public role in the Committee hearings was reduced to that of a documentary assistant. Although Farrar did not stay with the Committee to the end, his initial engagement in this controversial investigation is further evidence that his views had changed over the previous 16 years and that he had begun to doubt the equitable operation of the financial system he had once vigorously defended.

Although banks nationwide refused to respond to the Committee's

questionnaires, the Committee was still able to subpoena and interrogate officers of the nation's leading banks, and Untermeyer took full advantage of this power. Indeed, when the Committee hearings resumed, they began to make regular headlines. On December 18, Counsel Untermeyer began an aggressive but polite interrogation of banker J.P. Morgan that lasted two days. Hearings continued, and Untermeyer questioned other prominent bankers, notably George F. Baker of the First National Bank, on January 9 and 10, 1913.[161]

The conclusion of Mr. Baker's testimony is noteworthy:

Mr. UNTERMYER. We are speaking of this concentration which has come about and the power that it brings with it getting into the hands of very ambitious men, perhaps not overscrupulous. You see a peril in that, do you not?

Mr. BAKER. Yes.

Mr. UNTERMYER. So that the safety, if you think there is safety in the situation, really lies in the personnel of the men?

Mr. BAKER. Very much.

Mr. UNTERMYER. Do you think that is a comfortable situation for a great country to be in?

Mr. BAKER. Not entirely.

Mr. UNTERMYER. I think that is all. We are very much obliged to you.[162]

The Committee released its Report on February 28, 1913, with the conclusion that "there is an established and well-defined community of interest between a few leaders of finance,… which has resulted in great and rapidly growing concentration of the control of money and credit in the hands of these few men." Their Report was full of statistics to support their conclusions. Their most telling document was a diagram showing that six East Coast banking houses, themselves connected through interlocking directorates, "held 341 directorships in 112 corporations and controlled over $22 billion in resources in 1913 dollars."[163]

The Committee made five recommendations for reforming bank clearing houses, eight recommendations for better oversight of the New York Stock Exchange, and 21 recommendations to avoid concentration of ownership or power in banking and other corporations and improve other banking and financial practices. One of the most important recommendations was that interlocking corporate directorates be forbidden. The Pujo Committee hearings had revealed how corporate directors regularly served on the boards of several companies in the same indus-

try, which offered obvious opportunities for undesirable concentration of power. The Clayton Act of 1914 forbade that practice. The Pujo Committee made no recommendations regarding the creation of a central bank, which was not within their purview. Nevertheless, the Committee hearings had demonstrated the financial power of J.P. Morgan and his friends and the unhealthy extent to which the U.S. Treasury relied on them to maintain order and stability in the financial system. Thus, the Pujo Committee had also shown the urgent need for a public–private partnership, such as the Federal Reserve System, to take over that function.[164]

The Pujo Committee's Report appeared only four days before the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson on March 4, 1913. Their Report was surely not the first document to cross the President's desk, but the Committee's findings were one of several important influences that led Wilson to demand and obtain regulatory legislation that was considerably stronger than the Democrats had foreseen in their 1912 election platform. The three most important laws that Congress passed during Wilson's first term are:

> The Federal Reserve Act of 1913, which established a coordinated system of regional central banks that were able to provide more flexible supplies of currency and a more effective supervision of banking throughout the nation.[165]
>
> The Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914, which defined monopolistic practices, outlawed mergers and acquisitions that could substantially reduce competition, regulated interlocking directorates among banks and other corporations, and generally strengthened provisions of the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890.[166]
>
> The Federal Trade Commission Act of 1914, which created a federal agency empowered to enforce provisions of the Clayton and Sherman Acts and to define and prevent unfair or deceptive business practices.[167]

Woodrow Wilson's first term has been celebrated as the culmination of reform movements that had been growing in the United States for at least two decades. In the final wave of that movement, it was often progressive Democrats from the South who took the leading roles. Those who supported the Money Trust investigation, such as Chairman Arsène Pujo of Louisiana, his Deputy Chairman Hubert D. Stephens of

Mississippi, House Rules Committee Chairman Robert Lee Henry of Texas, and Committee Counsel Edgar Farrar, made news headlines only briefly. Among the better-known Southern reformers were Congressman Henry De Lamar Clayton Jr. of Alabama, who sponsored the Anti-Trust Act that bears his name, and Congressman Carter Glass, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on currency legislation, who played an essential role in the passage of the Federal Reserve Act and became Secretary of the Treasury during Wilson's second term. On the other hand, nearly all of the Southern Democratic reformers had also supported the disfranchisement of Black voters in every Southern State over the previous two decades. These progressives believed that the disfranchisement of Blacks was not anti-democratic but necessary to improve the quality of the electorate in order to implement their reform programs. Locked in the same mindset as the Louisiana reformers, white Democrats across the South believed that Blacks lacked the moral fiber necessary for responsible citizenship and were too ignorant to vote in their own interests. Since most Blacks refused to vote for Democrats unless paid or coerced, their votes meant either fraudulent elections or Democratic losses, neither of which was acceptable to white reformers. Somehow, Southern Democrats saw no inconsistency between their National reform programs that made the business world more democratic and their State reforms that made it impossible for many of their citizens to vote.[168]

According to *The Times-Democrat* of New Orleans, Edgar Howard Farrar had been strongly recommended to President-Elect Wilson for the position of Attorney General. Members of the Louisiana Congressional delegation, however, were reluctant to express their opinion by a formal vote since the President had not requested their advice. As it happened, Wilson chose as his first Attorney General James Clark McReynolds, who had previously served as Assistant Attorney General and was an experienced antitrust prosecutor.[169]

* * *

Edgar Farrar appears to have withdrawn from public affairs after the voters defeated the tax reform amendment of 1912. He had devoted so much effort to this reform that he surely considered this setback a personal defeat. The limited role he was able to play in the "Money Trust" investigation also may have discouraged him from further participation in national affairs. But a pair of family tragedies also affected

him profoundly at this turning point in his life. The first was the suicide of his daughter Lucinda on October 27, 1910, in Paris. Lucinda, a talented pianist, had gone to France to pursue her studies in music. Discouraged, depressed, and alone, the young lady wrote a farewell note, turned on the gas, and left this world at the age of 25.[170]

Scarcely a year later, Farrar's eldest son, Edgar Howard Farrar Jr., was shot and killed on the streets of New Orleans while attempting to apprehend the burglars who had robbed his home. On October 31, 1911, René Canton and his brother Lucien broke into his house and gathered up silverware, jewelry, and other valuable items while Farrar and his wife were away at the seaside. The son of one of the Farrars' servants, Theophilus Rogers, happened to pass by and saw the Canton brothers, Lucien and René, leaving the house, but thought nothing of it at the time. When the Farrars returned the next morning, Rogers learned of the burglary and later saw the two thieves walking toward the city center. He went quickly to inform Farrar, and both set off in pursuit by streetcar. When they caught up with them, Farrar, who was bigger and heavier than either, attempted to seize both of them at once. René wrenched himself free, stepped a short distance away, fired a fatal pistol shot at Farrar, and escaped. The police arrived in time to arrest Lucien, whom Rogers had subdued, and found and arrested René a few hours later. René Canton was tried and convicted of murder on February 17, 1912, and sentenced to be hanged. The Louisiana Supreme Court sustained his conviction. Lucien was found not guilty of murder but was later convicted of robbery and sentenced to life imprisonment.[171]

On Thanksgiving day, November 28, 1912, Edgar Howard Farrar Sr. wrote the following letter:

> His Excellency, Luther E. Hall
> Governor of Louisiana,
> Baton Rouge, LA.
> Dear Sir:
> On this day of Thanksgiving, the thoughts of all my household were turned to the chair made empty by the crime of the poor wretch, the date of whose execution you have fixed. This matter has been in our minds for some time, and after mature deliberation, all of us, father, mother; sisters, brothers and widow of my son, have concluded to ask you to reprieve Rene Canton, and to send his case before the Board of Pardons for their consideration

as to whether his sentence should not be commuted to imprisonment for life. We feel that this young brute is the product of our system of society, for which all of us, particularly persons of our position, are to some extent responsible. His father and mother are honest, hard working people. With them the struggle for existence was too bitter and exacting to permit them to devote the time and personal care necessary to develop the good and repress the evil in their son, who thus grew up amid the malign influences that surround the children of the poor in a large city. We believe that he shot my son as instinctively as a snake would strike one who crossed his path; and while his act was murder in law and in fact, yet it lacked that forethought and deliberation which make a crime of this sort unpardonable. This man is now in no condition to be sent into the next world. We hope and pray that time and reflection will bring repentance and that his soul may be saved.
Your obedient servant,
Edgar Howard Farrar[172]

Governor Hall acceded to his request and the Board of Pardons voted to Commute René Canton's sentence to life imprisonment on December 11, 1912.[173]

After the Louisiana voters defeated the Constitutional Amendments to reform the State tax system in November 1912, Edgar Farrar was no longer active in State politics. He did write the additional text for the State Constitution of 1913 that provided for the refinancing of State Bond indebtedness and the creation of the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board, but this was routine business for a lawyer who was a leading expert on these two questions.[174]

Advancing age also obliged Farrar to slow down. In March 1915, an illness caused him to postpone a court hearing, and on February 6, 1916, he suffered a stroke that forced him to retire. A few months later, his law firm was reorganized to adapt to the new situation; Farrar's name remained on the masthead, but another experienced lawyer, H. Generes Dufour, was brought in as a partner to help with the firm's still heavy workload. Edgar Howard Farrar spent his retirement at his summer home in Biloxi, Mississippi, where he died of pneumonia at the age of 72 on January 6, 1922.[175]

At the end of his life, his colleagues and friends agreed that he was

> faithful to his convictions, able to sustain them, and fearless in expression, the kind of leader that is the hope of democracies, for public right, public wrong, should everlastingly be the object of defense or attack by those who love our Institutions. It was Farrar's creed that this holy task was part of his duty as a citizen, a duty to be exercised at all times, without regard to his comfort, his other duties, the charms of friendship or the peace and quiet of successful life. Indeed, public service was the outstanding feature of his career….[176]

Penitentiary Reform

> From 1844 to 1901, almost without interruption, Louisiana leased her convicts to a number of private operators, if possible for profit; but if profit was not possible, leasing was at least a means of avoiding the expense of maintaining the prisoners.[177]

The convict lease system had long been the rule rather than the exception in the South, where the planter class traditionally resisted tax increases even for essential public services. Convict leasing began in Louisiana in 1844 as a State government move to reduce prison operating expenses. In 1869, Major Samuel L. James, who had recognized the profit potential in the system, purchased the lease concession from the previous lessees. The following year, the Republican controlled State legislature confirmed the lease to Samuel L. James and Company with a 21-year contract that provided for an annual rent starting at $5000 and increasing by $1000 every subsequent year.[178]

In 1869, James and his associates began working the convicts on levee construction and maintenance, on railroad construction, and on private cotton and sugar plantations, which required moving the prisoners away from the penitentiary. This system continued until the end of the extended lease in 1901 with little or no control by the State government. The decaying State Penitentiary building in Baton Rouge was retained mainly as a receiving and transit center until 1917.[179]

In 1875, several Black Senators and representatives protested that convict laborers working outside the penitentiary were taking jobs that could have been performed by free men and thereby stealing their livelihood. White legislators joined them and passed Act 22 of 1875, which

prohibited the convicts from being employed outside the penitentiary; this law was never enforced and was repealed in 1878. Meanwhile, Major James had fallen behind in his annual payments, and the District Attorney of East Baton Rouge Parish filed suit demanding immediate payment or forfeiture of the lease. Both Republican Governor Kellogg and his successor, Democratic Governor Nicholls, recommended that the suit not be pressed because the State had made no provision for maintaining the prisoners in the antiquated building at Baton Rouge. The suit was settled by arbitration, but James still made no payment until 1881. James purchased the Angola Plantation in 1880 and used prisoners to work the plantation for his personal benefit.[180]

The question of penitentiary reform has always been a secondary issue in Louisiana politics. Those legislators who favored canceling Samuel L. James's prison concession argued that the State should take direct control of the penitentiary system and profit directly from the prisoners' labor. Those who opposed canceling the lease argued that this would expose the State to financial risk that was difficult to evaluate, whereas the lease protected the State against loss even if James did not make his payments. James's opponents introduced bills to cancel the lease in every legislative session from 1884 to 1890, but to no avail. Governor McEnery and Senator Charles Cordill consistently opposed cancellation, but they did act to introduce minor reforms. In 1886, the Governor asked the legislature to reform the system for commutation of convicts' sentences, and Senator Cordill introduced and obtained approval of bills to enable commutation of life sentences after prisoners had served 15 years and liberal commutation for first offenders serving shorter sentences.[181]

Financial considerations motivated the legislators to renew Major James's lease for another ten years in 1890. When the legislators considered renewal, James and Company had to match or beat competing offers from another potential lessee, which brought his annual rent up to $50,000. Governor Nicholls, who was returned to office in 1888, would have preferred that the State take over the penitentiary but made no serious effort to achieve that end.[182]

The scandal lay not so much in James's private profits but rather in the State's complete abdication of responsibility for control of prisons and corrections.

> Moreover, the particular history of Angola describes a cruelly ingenious form of post-Emancipation slavery. While depriving inmates of social rights and benefits, the government compelled them to support—in fact, turn a profit for—the state. Until 1901, Louisiana exempted itself from responsibility for inmates by leasing them to private companies and individuals….[183]

This uncontrolled outsourcing inevitably led to the abuse and mistreatment of prisoners. The lessee had no financial incentive to provide adequate care for the prisoners. As one unidentified Southerner put it when speaking at the National Convention of Charities in 1903: "Before the war we owned the negroes. If a man had a good negro, he could afford to take care of him: if he was sick, get a doctor. He might even get gold plugs in his teeth. But these convicts: we don't own 'em. One dies, get another."[184]

According to historian Mark Carleton's estimation, "Between 1870 and 1901, three thousand Louisiana convicts, most of them blacks, may have died under the lessee's regime." The last ten years of convict leasing were surely the worst for the convicts. "The convict death toll … reached an all-time high after 1894: 216 during 1896 alone and probably close to 800 altogether for the last seven years of the lease." Work on the levees was the most physically demanding, but the lessee made no effort to assign prisoners to levee camps according to their fitness for such work. "[L]ife on the levees was short for less robust prisoners. Overwork and brutal treatment in the levee camps were responsible for most of the recorded deaths among the inmates between 1890 and 1900."[185]

Murphy J. Foster was elected Governor in 1892. In response to his request, the legislature approved a constitutional amendment in 1894 that would have prohibited the leasing of convicts after 1901, but the voters rejected the amendment in 1896. Undeterred by this setback, delegates to the 1898 Constitutional Convention approved a clause in the new constitution that prohibited the leasing of convicts "to private firms or individuals" after 1901. Meanwhile, Major James died in 1894, but the lease continued under the control of his son and executors.[186]

In 1901, the convict lease system ended, and pursuant to Act No. 70 of 1900, the State assumed direct control of the Louisiana penitentiary system through a new three-man Board of Control. The State bought the 8000-acre Angola Plantation from the lessee's heirs, and the State's purchases of neighboring plantations brought penitentiary holdings to

18,000 acres by 1922. The Board of Control had most of the convicts growing cotton until 1912, but after boll-weevil infestation devastated cotton crops, they switched to sugar cane as their primary cash crop. Convict labor was still required for levee construction, but following the legislation of 1900, prisoners were classified according to their physical conditions, and only the hardiest were sent to the levee camps.[187]

There were never enough prisoners sentenced to hard labor to handle the entire volume of work required on the levees. Gov McEnery's Message of 1884 estimated that only 10% of levee work could be performed by convict labor and that other means would have to be found to keep the convicts occupied. In 1900, the Board of State Engineers evaluated the contribution of convict laborers to levee construction over the preceding 30 years and found that they could not be expected to do more than 15% of the average quantity of levee work required.[188]

There was relatively little improvement in the treatment of convicts during the first two decades of State management. The Board of Control initially hired the same warden who had managed the penitentiary under the last years of the James family's regime. Costs rather than corrections continued to be the main consideration of penitentiary management. The legislature did appropriate over half a million Dollars through 1906 for new barracks and other essentials that the James family had ignored. Thereafter, the State expected the system to be self-supporting. Management lived up to these expectations by producing an operating profit from farming and levee work between 1902 and 1906, but flooding and the boll weevil dashed all hope of agricultural profits by 1912. In 1916, the legislature attempted to improve operating efficiency by replacing the three-man Board of Control with a single General Manager, but the penitentiary system never again became self-supporting.[189]

Even during their profitable years, management was parsimonious about introducing needed reforms. Act No. 70 of 1900 had authorized the construction of separate facilities for juvenile offenders, but this reform was given a low priority, and adolescents between 12 and 18 were confined in the same barracks as hardened criminals. A separate reformatory was completed in 1910 but was not large enough to house all juvenile offenders. Little or no effort was made to separate adult first offenders from other convicts. Inmates did benefit from more humane treatment, as evidenced by reduced death rates up to about 1920.

"Angola became one of the most humane southern prisons during the years (1916–23) of General Manager Henry L. "Marse Henry" Fuqua's administration. Fuqua, who later became Governor, insisted upon kinder treatment of the convicts."[190]

For the next 30 years, however, the State made little progress toward improving prison conditions. The few Governors who launched reform efforts repeatedly ran into budgetary limits that obliged them to retreat. In any case, prison reform never rose very high on the government's list of priorities. One of the main reasons for this was race; in 1900, approximately 84% of the prisoners were Black. Too many Louisiana politicians believed that Black offenders were incorrigible, that they were only suited for agricultural or construction work, and that it was useless to spend money to rehabilitate or train them. Governor Huey Long (1928-32) shared those beliefs. "Huey understood that voter sentiment opposed 'coddling' convicts, especially since a majority of the prisoners were black. (Moreover, the relatives of black convicts did not vote.)"[191]

For three years of his term, Long lavished public funds on schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, and other projects that voters appreciate. Only when the time came to economize did he turn his attention to the prisons. In 1931, he appointed R.L. Hines as General Manager of the penitentiary. Hines had earned the nickname of "Tighty" as business manager of Louisiana State University. He continued to merit that name in his new job, following the Governor's orders to "operate the penitentiary 100 percent on the basis of efficiency…." The Hines regime did reduce prison deficits, mainly by forcing the prisoners to work harder. Prison records showed that for 1933 alone, prison guards administered 1547 floggings with "the double lash." Hines died in 1936, but his successors continued to use the same management system. Prisoners protested by escaping. Management responded in 1936 by investing in guard towers, high-powered rifles, and bloodhounds, but prison discipline remained brutal until 1952.[192]

Governor Earl Long, Huey's younger brother, served his first full term from 1948 to 1952. Earl Long introduced a spending program similar to his brother's, but initially more favorable to prisons. The prison system received a substantially increased subsidy for operating expenses and $2,000,000 for infrastructure and staff housing. Long's first superintendent, Rollo C. Lawrence, attempted to launch a rehabilitation program, but Long gave him little or no support. In practice, few prisoners were available for rehabilitation because most of them were

required for work year-round on the prison's traditional sugar crop. In 1950, Long appointed Rudolf Easterly as warden of Angola. Easterly's ideas about running a prison did not accord with those of Lawrence, who resigned in the following year.[193]

Less than a year after Easterly's appointment, a scandal broke out that was to revolutionize the Louisiana prison system's approach to the treatment of convicts. In February of 1951, a released prisoner revealed to newspapers that a group of convicts had each cut one of their heel tendons to avoid hard work in the fields and further punishment. This self-mutilation continued until a total of 41 white prisoners had cut one heel tendon, and some of them had cut both. Newspapers demanded an immediate investigation, but Governor Long's initial response was completely off the mark: "If the present efficient leadership at Angola is left alone, Angola will be on a paying basis before I leave office or shortly afterward…." Somehow, this Governor—so attuned to public opinion on other matters—had not yet realized that his voters were no longer demanding economy but humane treatment in Louisiana's prisons. In the post-war era of prosperity, the shocking news of protest by self-mutilation quickly brought prison reform to the forefront of public concern.[194]

Despite his negative attitude toward prison reform, Long appointed a 34-member Citizens' Committee to investigate conditions at Angola. The Committee spent a full month examining the prison and confirmed that conditions were just as brutal and degrading as rumors alleged. Their recommendations were:

- To introduce rehabilitation and vocational training programs.
- To hire a qualified penologist to take charge of the system, and keep it free from political influence.
- To use a merit system to evaluate hired personnel.
- To end corporal punishment.
- To segregate first offenders, "incorrigibles, perverts, and other abnormal inmates" from ordinary prisoners.[195]

Among the members of the Committee was Margaret Richardson Dixon, the youngest child of Roger Wolcott Richardson and Josephine Pettit. (See Chapter 12.) Margaret went to work as a newspaper reporter in 1928, following her graduation from Louisiana State University. By 1949, she had become Managing Director of the Baton Rouge Advocate.

In 1951, Governor Earl Long appointed her to the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors. Margaret, usually called Maggie, soon became the Governor's friend and trusted advisor.[196]

Long's Lieutenant Governor, Bill Dodd, wrote that she was…the only reporter I knew who had Earl's confidence and could influence him to embrace any kind of reform program. She was wholly responsible for Earl's changing our state prison system from a brutal and neglected stepchild to a fairly well-operated program…."[197]

Margaret and others, however, could not convince Governor Long to implement the Citizens' Committee's recommendations before the end of his first term. Since Governors were not permitted to succeed themselves in office at that time, Earl Long could not seek reelection in 1952. Louisiana chose Robert F. Kennon as Governor, a Democrat who did not support the Long dynasty. Kennon immediately began to implement the Committee's recommendations with the help of generous appropriations from the legislature. Most importantly, his administration brought in a team of experienced penologists to manage the prisons and stopped using the system as a dumping ground for unqualified beneficiaries of political patronage. By the end of Kennon's term, the new administration had laid the groundwork for the Committee's recommended program. New barracks had been completed, thereby enabling staff to segregate the prisoners into three categories: the incorrigibles, the turbulent or obstructive, and the majority. Segregation not only improved conditions for the majority but also enabled the launch of a rehabilitation and education program. This was only the beginning of penal reform in Louisiana, and many doubted that Earl Long would continue the effort as he began his second full term in 1956.[198]

But "Old Earl" surprised nearly everyone. Not only did he let the reform program run its course, but he also appointed a Parolee Rehabilitation Committee that drew up detailed plans for a professional parole system. Another innovation for the benefit of parolees and prisoners was an incentive system that paid prisoners up to five cents an hour for their work in prison. Half of the accumulated wages could be used for miscellaneous purchases in prison, and the rest could be saved as a nest egg to finance parolees' first weeks of freedom while they were looking for work. Finally, a long-planned institution for first offenders was inaugurated at DeQuincy in western Louisiana. This new facility would make it easier to separate young delinquents from hardened

criminals and hopefully to prepare them to stay out of prison in the future.[199]

By the end of Earl Long's second term, Louisiana prison reform appeared well underway. As reforms advanced, however, reactionary politicians continued to criticize the new out-of-state professional administrators for being too soft on convicts. Some of the senior employees did not appreciate the changes either. And shortfalls in State revenues often obliged Governors to pause or even cancel reform programs. In short, since the end of the Long dynasty, prison reform has regularly advanced two steps only to retreat by one. At the same time, the prison population has continued to grow faster than the State population due to the "war on drugs" and other tough-on-crime crusades. Louisiana has tried to deal with the problem by outsourcing some prisoners to private corporations with mixed results. Despite the best efforts of reformers, Louisiana can't seem to get ahead of the problem, and the State is perennially accused of having the worst prisons in the Western world.[200]

The Mississippi River Commission

When Congress created the Mississippi River Commission in 1879, Henry Richardson and other levee engineers had high hopes that Federal aid for flood control would soon be available to supplement the inadequate sums that riverside states could raise through taxation. That aid would eventually flow, but it would be a long time coming. The text of the law was promising: the Commission was to develop plans, specifications, and estimates "… to correct, permanently locate, and deepen the channel and protect the banks of the Mississippi River; to improve and give safety and ease to the navigation thereof; prevent destructive floods; to promote and facilitate commerce, trade, and the postal services."[201]

Although the original law, passed by a Democratic Congress, specifically authorized flood control measures, Republican control of Congress after 1880 focused the Commission's efforts on navigation. Republicans accepted the Federal government's role in improving interstate navigation along the Mississippi but opposed expenditures for flood control that favored the private interests of riverside planters rather than the general welfare. As a result, the 1881 Rivers and Harbors Bill read in part, "that no portion of the sum hereby appropriated shall be used in

the repair or construction of levees for the purpose of preventing injury to lands by overflow or for any other purpose whatever, except as a means of deepening or improving the channel of said river." A similar provision appeared in every appropriation for the Mississippi River Commission until 1890.[202]

More problems arose because the Commission members did not always agree on policy or even on the basic principles of hydraulic engineering, a profession still in its infancy. Under the founding law, the President appointed seven commissioners: three from the Army Corps of Engineers, including the Commission's chairman, one from the Coast and Geodetic Survey, and three civilians, including at least two engineers. Civilian engineer James Eads was the most influential member during the Commission's first years. Eads held immense prestige after his success in clearing and deepening a navigable channel at the mouth of the Mississippi. Eads had built jetties that narrowed the channel and concentrated its current, enabling it to carry accumulated sediment to the sea. He wanted to adapt this method to the entire river by constraining it within levees. This would require closing all the gaps and crevasses in the existing levee system and shutting off all the river's natural outlets. Brigadier General Cyrus B. Comstock opposed Eads's proposal, contending that levees were of no value in deepening the river's navigable channel. Instead, it was necessary to narrow the low-water channel with low-water structures, or jetties, built in the river bed. Eads was not opposed to jetties but maintained that levees were also necessary. The majority ruled in favor of both levees and jetties, but the Commission's inability to submit an unequivocal recommendation made a poor impression on Congress, which appropriated only $1,000,000 of the $5,333,000 the Commission had requested in 1881.[203]

During its first decade, the Mississippi River Commission (MRC) found it difficult to make clear recommendations to Congress about levees. A majority believed that confining the river within levees was essential to keep the navigable channel clear. However, levees strong enough to keep the river in its channel would provide the ancillary benefit of flood control, which Congress did not wish to finance. Rather than make any recommendation in its initial report, the Commission referred the question to an internal Committee on Outlets and Levees comprising B.M. Harrod, General Charles R. Suter, and Henry Mitchell. Following the massive flood of 1882, delegates from State and local levee authorities met with the MRC and pleaded for assistance in restoring

levee protection in the lower Mississippi Valley. In response, after much tergiversation, the Outlets and Levees Committee issued its report. They recommended building levees "where such structures may be required for the improvement of navigation, by the adoption of a standard of elevation sufficient to confine all ordinary floods." The majority believed this standard "would produce the maximum effect in channel improvement at the minimum cost," but "would not be of sufficient height to protect the adjacent lands from overflow during great floods." The MRC adopted this policy recommendation, which enabled them to help finance levee construction but kept their flood control efforts secondary to navigation for the next decade.[204]

In 1882, the MRC requested an appropriation of $5,136,000 but received only $4,123,000 out of a Rivers and Harbors Bill totaling $18,700,000. The Commission allocated $1,300,000 of its appropriation to close breaks and gaps in the levee system. They spent most of the remainder on 1) revetments to prevent riverbanks from collapsing and blocking navigation channels, and 2) jetties in the riverbed to contract and deepen navigable channels. As the MRC had requested, the 1882 Rivers and Harbors Act clarified their relation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by specifying that the Corps would carry out the works initiated by the MRC under the supervision of the MRC.[205]

For the rest of the decade, the MRC spent what little it could to help renew the levee system, but most of that effort fell to State and local agencies. The Commission also continued its efforts to design and build bank revetments and jetties. Unfortunately, the first structures they designed proved too lightweight to resist spring high waters. Replacement costs then swelled just as Congress grew stingier. Between 1882 and 1890, the MRC received only intermittent, unpredictable, and inadequate appropriations, which temporarily obliged it to curtail its pioneering efforts toward bank revetment and channel contraction. Although financial stringency limited the MRC's accomplishments during the 1880s, at least it began to set standards and specifications for levee construction and to encourage unified efforts to improve navigation and flood control where the States had previously gone their separate ways.[206]

In 1890, heavy rains in the Ohio and White River valleys raised water levels on the lower Mississippi River to dangerous levels. The MRC helped reinforce the levees as much as possible with its remaining resources. Even though the maximum discharge was less than that of

1882, the river was higher than ever before. With hindsight, it seems evident that the improved levee system forced floodwaters higher, but the Commission chose not to reevaluate its strategy. Instead, they noted that levee improvements since the previous flood had reduced the number of crevasses from 284 in 1882 to 53 in 1890. In its 1890 report, the MRC claimed, "…the lesson taught by the flood is the same as that of other great floods, namely, the necessity of raising and strengthening the levees."[207]

Despite its enthusiasm for levees, the MRC had not yet adopted "all levees" as doctrine. Commission President Comstock added a brief appendix to the 1890 Report in which he strongly advocated leaving the Atchafalaya outlet open and increasing its capacity during large floods. The history of the Atchafalaya, he argued, showed that an outlet that is small relative to the main river will not cause the river's bed to rise to any appreciable degree, especially if it is opened only during flood season. He added that existing levees below the Red River could not withstand the full volume of great floods, as evidenced by the numerous crevasses along those banks in 1890.[208]

In May 1890, Congress passed an emergency appropriation of $1,000,000 for the lower Mississippi River. But when the House of Representatives considered the biennial Rivers and Harbors bill, they approved only an additional $1,000,000 for the MRC. Imagine the MRC's relief and surprise when the Senate increased its appropriation to $3,500,000, and the House reluctantly agreed. At the same time, the Senate also removed the restriction against using these funds for flood control, which had hobbled the MRC's activities since 1882. "The MRC, in turn, unanimously and promptly allotted $1.45 million for the construction of levees." This trend continued in 1892 when Congress authorized the Secretary of War to make multi-year contracts. One such authorization that year was to the MRC for $2,000,000 the first year and $2,675,000 per year for three years. The attitudes of key players in Washington had finally turned in favor of flood control, which allowed the MRC to spend ever greater percentages of its resources on levees.[209]

This new generosity came just in time. After more crevasses during the spring floods of 1891, water levels dropped sharply in the autumn, blocking essential navigation downriver from St. Louis to New Orleans. The Commission then began a multi-year project to construct dredges. Their experimental dredge was so successful that by 1896, they abandoned their expensive bank stabilization and channel contraction works

and built a fleet of four more dredges instead. Given the MRC's new orientation toward flood control and dredging, their belief that levees would eventually deepen the navigable channel now seemed irrelevant as well as doubtful. Nevertheless, the Commission's majority had not yet rejected that theory.[210]

Meanwhile, those MRC Commissioners who might have opposed levee construction for theoretical or doctrinaire reasons had resigned, and the new Commission unanimously favored levee construction to improve navigation and flood control. This unanimity favored the MRC's growing expenditures on levees, which, together with continuing local contributions, led to a spectacular growth in levee construction during the 1890s. By 1895, the MRC predicted in its Annual Report that by the summer of 1896, "all these [levee] lines will be continuous and very nearly if not absolutely of standard grade and dimension." The floods of 1897, however, showed that those efforts would not be sufficient. The high water of that year, which was now restricted between levees for much of its journey, again reached record heights in the lower Mississippi. The Commission defended its record by pointing out that levee crevasses were fewer and damages proportionately less than in the preceding floods of 1890. They went on to claim that "The important fact that the floodwaters of the Mississippi River may be permanently controlled by a system of levees that can be constructed within a limit of expense warranted by the advantages to be gained seems to have been fairly demonstrated by the flood of 1897."[211]

Among the MRC Commissioners, B.M. Harrod was probably the most zealous supporter of an all-levee system. During the 1897 high waters, a reporter from the New Orleans *Times-Democrat* gave Harrod the chance to respond to critics in a wide-ranging informal interview. The reporter asked, "This flood does not alter your adherence to the all-levee system, then?" Harrod replied:

> Quite the contrary. Why should it? The theory is that the proper place for the river is in the river, and that when the water tries to overflow the banks, the best thing to do is to raise the banks.
>
> Confine the river to the course of the river bed and unquestionably you raise the flood height. But what would be the result if this flood were not confined?…
>
> However, just at present is the time to work on the levees and prevent any more crevasses. There is ample time to discuss the

> respective merits of the outlet and all-levee theories after the flood subsides. …
>
> In the meantime, I would suggest that the outlet advocates employ a capable engineer and get him to prepare plans and specifications for an outlet system. … Let him … estimate the cost of building levees on each side of several outlets 100 miles long, some of them probably more; figure out the cost of excavating artificial channels for his outlets and then submit the project to capable judges …. If the outlet people would take that step, than we would be in a position to argue the matter, with illustrations; and the authorities, who furnish the means, would be in a position to consider the matter seriously.[212]

The 1897 flood led Congress to reevaluate the Mississippi flood control program and the effectiveness of the Mississippi River Commission's policies. The Senate Commerce Committee delegated this charge to a sub-committee chaired by Senator Knute Nelson of Minnesota. The Nelson Committee considered reservoirs, outlets, reforestation, and levees as methods of flood control. It relied mainly on the Corps of Engineers and the MRC for information and technical opinions. Their report, which appeared on December 15, 1898, concluded that reservoirs were too expensive, found no value for reforestation and outlets, and strongly endorsed levees and the MRC's policies for building them.[213]

> From all the evidence taken and considered by your committee it is evident that the basins and bottoms along the Mississippi River exposed to the floods of the river can only be protected and preserved from such floods by an ample and complete system of levees from Cairo [Illinois] to head of the Passes.[214]

Unfortunately, the Nelson Committee's superficial analysis consecrated the MRC's "levees only" policy as flood control doctrine for well beyond the next decade. The Nelson Committee also recognized that local levee districts had assumed heavy debt to pay for the Mississippi levee system and that they were now faced with further expenditures to repair the 1897 flood damages. Their Report concluded that State and local authorities alone could not finance the completion of the levee system and recommended that the Federal government continue its

support for flood control on the Mississippi River. "In fact, in the 30 years after the Nelson Report, the MRC would commit ever-greater resources toward strengthening and enlarging the levees to the delight and relief of cash-strapped levee districts."[215]

Congress responded by appropriating $2 million in addition to the $3 million already available for the Mississippi Valley. The MRC coordinated prompt and extensive repairs to the levee system, which in 1898 held up against record high waters without a single break. In 1903, however, floodwaters again caused multiple crevasses in the system. This time, the MRC found that the deficient structures were either older levees that had not been properly constructed or new levees that had not been finished to standard.[216]

Their request for funds from Congress seemed slightly more aggressive than usual:

> If the flood damages of 1903 may be approximated at $5,000,000, the previous expenditure of that sum in permanent work would have largely if not entirely prevented them. Every year's delay in completion incurs the risk of similar loss.[217]

On March 9, 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt nominated Henry Richardson to the Mississippi River Commission. Henry replaced Benjamin Morgan Harrod, whom the President appointed to the Panama Canal Commission. As Louisiana's Chief Engineer, Henry had frequently attended meetings of the MRC. Additionally, since he and Harrod were next-door neighbors, Harrod could keep him up to date on the Commission's inner workings and their relationship with Congress. (See Chapter 12.) Henry seemed ready to be a functioning Commissioner from day one.[218]

Although Henry and Morgan Harrod were close friends, their backgrounds were completely different. Whereas Henry had worked his way up through the ranks in civilian and military life, Harrod was born to the New Orleans elite. He received his basic education from private tutors and a BA from Harvard in 1856. He studied architecture and civil engineering and received an MA from Harvard in 1859. In 1861, he enlisted in the Confederate Army as a private, was rapidly promoted to First Lieutenant, and served as an engineering staff officer. Harrod had probably studied hydraulic engineering, but he had little or no experience building levees before he was appointed Chief of the Board of State

Engineers in 1877. Through their close association, the two men complemented each other's knowledge and experience. Considering Henry's experience and Harrod's influence, Henry probably also adhered to the "levees only doctrine," although he is not known to have expressed himself on that question.[219]

In the spring of 1904, a disastrous flood in the Sacramento River Basin caused millions of dollars in damage. Soon afterward, a convention of landowners and others interested in flood control requested the Governor of California to appoint a group of eminent engineers, including three from out-of-state, to submit a flood control plan for the Sacramento Valley in time for presentation to the 1905 legislature. With the Governor's approval, the Commissioner of Public Works appointed a commission of engineers to prepare a Sacramento River flood control and navigation plan. Major Thomas G. Dabney, USCE, Henry B. Richardson, Major H.M. Chittenden, USCE, and M.A. Nurse were the members. Dabney was the longtime head of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District, Chittenden was the head of Federal Works on the Missouri River for the Corps of Engineers, and Nurse was Chief Engineer for the California Commissioner of Public Works.[220]

On August 9, 1904, the Dabney Commission settled into its San Francisco offices. They promptly set to work after selecting Dabney as Chairman and Chittenden as Secretary. They had access to reams of documentary information on their subject. They interviewed local experts, the Governor, Congressmen, ranchers, and swampland speculators. They found little information on the San Joaquin River and decided to restrict their Report to the Sacramento River. The commissioners worked every day, not only in their offices but also on inspection trips. Previously scheduled meetings obliged the out-of-state commissioners to leave San Francisco on October 15 before finishing their report. They agreed to meet in Major Chittenden's offices in Sioux City, Iowa, on November 21 to prepare the final version. They filed their Report with the California Commissioner of Public Works on December 15, 1904, thus meeting their deadline.[221]

The Commission's Report proposed collecting all the flood waters of the tributaries into one enlarged main channel. This would have required closing nearly all natural outlets and straightening and widening the Sacramento's main channel from Colusa all the way down to Suisun Bay. Straightening would involve cutting through horseshoe bends and cutting off the convex side of lesser bends when widening.

The existing widths of the river ranged from 600 to 1400 feet; the Report recommended that those widths be increased to 1200 feet at Colusa, to 1600 feet at Suisun Bay, and proportionately in between. Constrained within higher and stronger levees, the river's greater volume could be expected to scour the channel deeper over time. While waiting for the channel to deepen, small temporary overflow canals would be excavated on each side of the main channel. The total estimated cost of this immense project was nearly $24,000,000.[222]

In short, the Dabney Commission attempted to impose on the Sacramento Valley a plan that corresponded perfectly with the levees-only theories that the Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi River Commission then held as doctrine.

Landowners may have been pleased when this concrete and detailed plan was submitted to the legislature, but the Dabney Commission's Report confounded California engineers who had previously studied the question. For example, their plan cast aside an 1894 proposal made by two California State engineers, Marsden Manson and C.E. Grunsky. The Manson-Grunsky Report had proposed a series of outlets leading from the existing channels of the Sacramento River and its main tributaries to a new second channel for flood waters. This promising proposal languished in execution because of a lack of funds. By 1904, however, the State had successfully completed small parts of their plan. The Dabney Commission found that the Manson-Grunsky plan was too expensive and did not correct the problems in the main channel. Specifically, they stated that the proposed outlets would likely cause excessive silting as the flood waters lost velocity when they left the main channel. This latter opinion differed from that of General Comstock, former President of the Mississippi River Commission, who maintained that such outlets did not cause excessive silting if they were opened only to carry away excessive flood waters.[223]

Fortunately, the Dabney Commission's recommendations were never implemented. In 1907 and 1909, the Sacramento Valley suffered floods that delivered the greatest volume of water anyone had ever seen. That inundation led historian Robert Kelley to write a merciless evaluation of the Commission's recommendations:

> The Dabney Commission had scoffed at Manson and Grunsky's estimate of 300,000 cubic feet per second as the most the Sacramento, in extreme peak flow, would produce, but in March

> 1907, the government's observers found that a monster flow of 600,000 cubic feet per second had poured out of the Sacramento's mouth into Suisun Bay. (Two years later, in 1909, the Sacramento would produce another gigantic flood of almost exactly the same magnitude as in 1907.) If anyone still clung to the Dabney Report's principles, they would have to accept levees (below the juncture of the Feather and the Sacramento) expanded not simply to 1200 feet apart, from the existing 600, but to as much as 3000. A single channel more than a half-mile wide down through the center of the Valley? The prospect was absurd.[224]

The Dabney Commission may be partially excused for their Report's deficiencies due to the tight deadline imposed upon them and the lack of recent information on the river system. Indeed, no survey of the rapidly evolving river system had been made since 1895. The Commission relied on U.S. Geological Survey gauge records from 1904 to estimate maximum flood volumes, and it appears that prior years' records were unavailable. The Commission's members stated in the Report's preamble that they had not realized the "full magnitude and complexity of the many-sided problem" when they accepted their mission, and they regretted that a lack of time and data prevented them from doing "full justice" to their task.[225]

The Dabney Commission's plan might have been considered a remarkable document, given the short time the members had to complete it and quantify their recommendations. However, the rigid "levees only" solution the plan would have imposed on the Sacramento River Valley soon proved ill-adapted to that river system. Unfortunately, it would take the Mississippi River Commission many more years to realize that the "levees only" doctrine was no better suited to the Mississippi River system than to the Sacramento.

Captain Thomas Jackson, USACE, was one of the engineers who would demolish the "levees only" doctrine. He was the engineer who formulated the California State legislature's flood-control plan, adopted in the California Flood Control Act of 1911. Jackson's plan called for maintaining the Sacramento's existing channel and creating outlets to a separate channel for floodwaters. Congress refused to provide financial support at that time but ultimately incorporated an amended version of Jackson's plan, with supporting funds, in the Flood Control Act of 1917. Jackson rose to the rank of Brigadier General by 1928. President Harding

then appointed him President of the Mississippi River Commission, which had finally recognized that outlets were a necessary part of any plan for the Mississippi.[226]

Meanwhile, Henry Richardson had returned to the routine of Commission meetings. He especially enjoyed the MRC's semi-annual inspection cruises. Every spring and fall, the Commission's members would steam down the Mississippi from St. Louis in the MRC's boat, the *Mississippi*. They inspected levees along the way at high water in the spring and at low water in the fall. The Commissioners stopped at key ports along the way, where they received local delegations, usually on board the *Mississippi*. They met with local Levee Board members, planters, and other interested citizens, exchanging information and receiving requests. This was the kind of professional activity that enabled Henry to share his vast experience with those who could use it most profitably.[227]

In 1907, Henry received another special assignment. The Secretary of War appointed him to a special board of five engineers whose mission was to examine the Mississippi River from St. Louis to its mouth, with a view to constructing and maintaining a navigable channel at least 14 feet deep year-round. In connection with this task, the board was also requested to evaluate a previous survey of a proposed waterway from Chicago to St. Louis. The Board's other members were Colonel W.H. Bixby, President of the Mississippi River Commission, Lieutenant Colonel C.M. Townsend, Lieutenant Colonel J.G. Warren, and Homer P. Ritter of the MRC and the Coast and Geodetic Survey. The board was authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1907 in response to lobbying by the recently formed Lakes to the Gulf Deep Waterways Association. Chicago business interests had taken the lead in organizing this association with the enthusiastic support of Senator Lorimer of Illinois. Their ultimate objective—which was to prove unrealistic—was to load ocean-going ships in Chicago, thus saving time and money on direct shipments to South America via the future Panama Canal. The Chicago interests were able to recruit additional support from cities along the line, which expected that a deep-water channel would lead to improved transportation and port facilities.[228]

The Army Chief of Engineers forwarded the Board's Report to the Secretary of War on June 7, 1909, with the following summary:

> The special board concludes that the most practicable means of obtaining and maintaining a navigable channel of 14 feet depth from St. Louis to the mouth of the Mississippi River is by the combined method of dredging and regularization works in the open river. The estimated cost of this plan of improvement is $128,600,000, with $6,500,000 annually for maintenance after completion of the work. In order to arrive at a correct understanding as to the estimated cost of securing a 14-foot channel from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico by the route under consideration it is necessary to add to the figures just given those contained in the report submitted in 1905 for that portion of the route from Chicago to St. Louis, namely, $30,097,462 for first cost and $310,000 for annual maintenance, giving a total estimated cost of a 14-foot waterway from Lake Michigan to the Gulf of Mexico of $158,697,462, with an estimated annual cost of $6,810,000 for maintenance.
>
> The Chief of Engineers is in accord with the views expressed by the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors as follows:
>
> It is not desirable to construct a navigable channel 14 feet in depth from St. Louis to the mouth of the Mississippi River, or from Chicago to the mouth of the Mississippi River.
>
> The Board believes that an 8-foot channel from Chicago to St. Louis, corresponding to the present 8-foot project from St. Louis to Cairo, is the least that would adequately meet the demands of commerce, and believes such a waterway would be desirable, provided its cost is reasonable.
>
> Present and prospective demands of commerce between Chicago and the Gulf will be adequately served by a through channel 9 feet in depth, which may be obtained without violent changes of existing methods of improvement.
>
> The present demands of commerce between St. Louis and the mouth of the Mississippi River are adequately met by the existing projects, having for their object to obtain and maintain an 8-foot channel from St. Louis to the mouth of the Ohio and a channel of not less than 9 feet in depth below the mouth of the Ohio.[229]

The Chicago boosters rejected the Board's opinion that a deep-water channel was unnecessary and continued their lobbying efforts well into the next decade. If they had read the Board's complete report, they

might have accepted that their dream of direct shipment from Chicago to Latin America was unlikely to be realized.[230]

> Large, deep-draft, heavily loaded boats are unwieldy, especially when trying to back against the current; and when coming downstream such boats can not be handled safely except in wide, deep channels, such as are far greater than can ever be expected in the Mississippi River above the mouth of Red River. While an ocean steamer might safely go slowly up the Mississippi against the current with a draft somewhat less than the channel depth over its bars, it is very doubtful whether it could ever get down the river with safety except during high freshets when all bars were deeply submerged.[231]

The Board's Report continued, pointing out that deep water channels on the Mississippi were already available beyond New Orleans, but large ships were not using them:

> No vessels of over 2,500 tons make use of the Mississippi Valley except in the deepwater portion of the river below the mouth of Red River. Although every deep-draft boat reaching New Orleans could easily proceed up the river about 130 miles further, to Baton Rouge, there is apparently no incentive for its doing so, as the goods can best be put ashore at New Orleans, where the terminal facilities are good, after which railroad charges for delivery at factory sidings are usually less than river freights combined with drayage up the bank and across the city or country to the factory.[232]

The Board's Report also noted that "The daily expense of large steamers is so great that they must avoid all possible delays in loading and unloading in order to be profitable." It is much more economical for large steamers to unload their entire cargoes at one well-equipped port than it would be to deliver to several recipients at different ports along the river. Therefore, ports upriver beyond Baton Rouge would gain little from a deep-water channel to St. Louis. It was only after the development of the petrochemical complex south of Baton Rouge that mid-sized tankers navigated up the Mississippi directly to Baton Rouge.[233]

After the railroads built their north–south lines along the Mississippi,

they forced most of the riverboat packet lines out of business. By 1906, there was little or no demand for waterborne transport on the Mississippi or onward to Chicago. Barge lines remained active until the railroads added spur lines and other conveniences for shippers of bulk and semi-manufactured products. The one barge line that remained in 1912 struggled to make a profit because the railroads were carrying the freight at a lower cost. Nevertheless, the Mississippi River Commission's project to maintain a year-round minimum depth of eight to nine feet from St. Louis to the Gulf prepared the river for the resurgence of barge traffic when it came.[234]

The 1907 Rivers and Harbors Act mandated the creation of a channel at least six feet deep from Minneapolis to St. Louis, which opened opportunities for barge transport to serve five of the nation's most agriculturally productive states. Pursuant to the 1930 Rivers and Harbors Act, "the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed the Upper Mississippi River and the Illinois Waterway 9-Foot Channel Project, which transformed the rivers into reliable, safe passageways." This required the construction of a series of dams with locks along the Upper Mississippi Waterway and the Illinois Waterway, which links Chicago to the Mississippi. At the time of writing, these two waterways comprised 37 dams with locks that have usually enabled the Corps of Engineers to maintain a minimum year-round channel depth of nine feet. In recent years, however, drought has often made it impossible to maintain that depth during the low-water season. A lack of water to fill the channel occasionally forces the Corps to close the waterway temporarily. At the least, low water obliges barge operators to lighten their loads, thereby raising transport costs and export prices of corn, soybeans, and other products shipped from New Orleans.[235]

Henry Richardson continued to serve on the MRC until he died in 1909. He had spent most of his career building levees and probably knew more about the practical side of that profession than any other member of the Mississippi River Commission. He was a self-taught engineer who had mastered his profession on the job. With that background, he probably did not participate actively in theoretical discussions of hydraulic engineering problems. Nor was he one to seek attention in groups, which is probably why he is never mentioned in the MRC's official history. On the other hand, thanks to his long experience building levees and dealing with local levee boards, he undoubtedly rendered valuable service to the MRC in those practical areas.

Chapter 12
One Family

As the wife of a civil engineer for 13 years, Anna Howard Richardson was used to moving her household, but in September 1880, the prospect of leaving St. Joseph for New Orleans seemed just too much. Ordinarily, Nannie would have been delighted at the prospect of Henry becoming Chief State Engineer, thus seeing his long dedication to the levee system finally rewarded. But the news of his appointment arrived at the worst possible time. On September 1, 1880, her father, Thomas Prince Farrar, died, leaving his widow, Anna Marie Farrar, with a minor child, Field, to bring up and Nannie's aging grandmother, Jane Kempe, to care for. Nannie was left to deal all at once with the tragedy of her father's death, the arrangements to be made for the care of her mother's family as well as her own three children, and the prospect of separation from family and friends. To compound these problems, Henry was probably of little help during that first hard week of September because he and his staff were busy conducting a survey of Louisiana levees along the Mississippi from the Arkansas border to the Gulf.[1]

At this difficult moment, it was probably Nannie's grandmother, Jane Kempe, and Nannie's eldest brother, Edgar Howard (Ned) Farrar, who came to the rescue. Jane Kempe owned a house in New Orleans at 536 Royal Street, where she had spent little time since the war. Her nephew, John Francis Girault, had been taking care of this house for her and had prevented it from falling into ruin. Fortunately, Edgar Farrar had recently renovated the old house and was living there in June 1880 with his wife, and their one-year-old son, Edgar Jr. He was also able to lodge his mother-in-law, Mary Stamps, his mother, two younger brothers, and his grandmother. His mother, Anna Marie Farrar, moved to New Orleans before November 20, 1880, probably accompanied by Girault Farrar and Field Montgomery Farrar. The house is no longer standing

but has given way to a building that housed the Mardi Gras Zone Supermarket when the present text was written.[2]

Nannie and the Richardson children did not immediately join Henry in New Orleans. The 1881 issue of *Soard's Directory* listed Henry Richardson as Chief State Engineer, with offices in the State House, but no residence in New Orleans. Before the 1882 directory appeared, however, Henry had found a house at 39 Piety Street, in what is now called the Bywater district of New Orleans, northeast of the French Quarter and close to the river. The Richardson family was settled in New Orleans before November 30, 1882, when the twins, Roger Wolcott and Henry Thurston, were born.[3]

Due to a change in street numbering in the 1890s, it is difficult to determine whether they lived in the present 600 or 700 block. In either case, all the odd-numbered houses have been torn down and replaced by the Mickey Marter Playground on the north side of Royal Street and by a furniture factory on the south side. The remaining houses nearby are mostly typical New Orleans double shotgun houses, which suggests that the Richardsons lived in something similar. The double shotguns were – and still are – often rented as side-by-side duplexes with different numbers for each side. Since a single shotgun house is only one room wide and three to five rooms deep, the Richardsons and their five children surely needed both sides of a double shotgun by the end of 1882, which would explain why the city directories showed them at 39 Piety Street in 1882 and next door at 41 Piety in 1883.[4]

The Bywater district, then known as the Faubourg Washington, was a working-class neighborhood primarily inhabited by German and Irish immigrants and Blacks. The location had at least two redeeming features for Nannie and Henry: it was only about six blocks from the Farrars' home on Royal Street, and it was situated on relatively high ground, little exposed to the risk of flooding. Indeed, this part of Bywater remained dry during Hurricane Katrina in 2000 despite its proximity to a breach in the Industrial Canal.[5]

Aside from public records, we have few details of the Richardson family's life during the three years they lived in Faubourg Washington. The ambiance of a growing family surely brought many happy moments. Inevitably, not all the family news was good: on March 23, 1881, less than a year after the death of Nannie's father, the Reverend Henry Richardson died. Henry probably did not go to Maine to share his family's grief; at that time of year, he had to stay close to the Mississippi

River to direct the defense against the spring floods that would soon reach Louisiana. The death of Jane Kempe on May 29, 1882, in New Orleans was the third loss for the family in as many years.[6]

Family Connections

The Farrar family must have been a great help to Nannie during those first busy years in New Orleans. It was at least reassuring to have her family nearby since Henry was so often away on levee business, especially during the record spring floods of 1882. By that time, Edgar Howard (Ned) Farrar was widely acquainted in New Orleans and could introduce the Richardsons to anyone they needed to know. Ned had built a successful law practice in New Orleans and had been Assistant City Attorney from 1878 to 1880, when he was elected City Attorney. (See Chapter 11.) In 1878, he married Lucinda Davis Stamps, granddaughter of Governor Humphreys of Mississippi and a grandniece of Jefferson Davis. When they moved into the Royal Street house, they had only one child, Edgar Howard Farrar Jr., so they still had plenty of room for more relatives. By 1888, Ned and Lucy had moved to an impressive new home at 543 (later 2209) St. Charles Avenue at the site of the present Indigo Hotel.[7]

The Reverend John Francis Girault, who was Nannie's first cousin once removed, may have been another helpful connection. Girault was Rector of St. Anna's Episcopal Church until he died in 1889, and St. Anna's was the Episcopal Church nearest to the Richardson residence on Piety Street. Girault's career history had shown an unusual mix of business, military, and religious experience. His marriage in 1855 to Catherine Proctor Laidlaw, Peter Laidlaw's daughter, suggests that he may have acquired his early business experience with the commission merchants Peter Laidlaw & Co. From 1856 through 1859, he was actively engaged in the cotton trade for the account of his own firm, J.F. Girault & Co. During this period, he also devoted time to the Episcopal Church, where he was ordained a Deacon in 1857 and was listed as an Assistant Minister at St. Peter's Church, New Orleans in 1859.[8]

Girault had seen active army service during the Mexican War and had reached the rank of Major. When the Civil War arrived, he interrupted his business and religious careers and raised a regiment of Confederate guards. He subsequently served as a staff officer in several commands, including that of Major General M.L. Smith during the siege

of Vicksburg. He reached the rank of Colonel by the end of the war. In the post-war years, the cotton trade was less profitable, and Girault gave increasing attention to the church. He was ordained to Priest's orders in 1867, first as Rector of St. Peter's, and when that small Parish was liquidated, as Rector of the new St. Anna's Church on Esplanade Avenue, where it stands today. He later became Secretary of the Standing Committee of the Louisiana Diocese and was one of three nominees to succeed Bishop Wilmer after he died in 1878. The Reverend Dr. John Francis Girault and his family lived at 59 Esplanade Street.[9]

Later, Nannie's uncle Edgar Douglas Farrar, a retired judge, came to New Orleans, where he lived near his son Floyd, and for a time with his son, Walton. Nannie visited him occasionally before his death on January 4, 1901.[10]

The Family Home and Neighbors

The Cotton Centennial Exposition of 1884 led to increased real estate development on the western side of the city, which came at just the right time for the Richardsons. A "double shotgun" residence in the working-class Bywater district was not a permanent housing solution for them. By the spring of 1885, their sixth child was already on the way. Anna Girault Richardson was born on December 30, 1885. Aside from considerations of space, a modest home in a working-class neighborhood was not a suitable address for a senior civil servant and his family. Henry probably did not concern himself much with social status as long as he had a good roof over his family's heads, but Nannie, although far from snobbish, was not immune to such considerations, as occasional comments in her diary would show. In any case, by the end of 1885, the Richardsons had moved into their own home at 279 Foucher Street (later renumbered as 1631) at the western edge of the Garden District.[11]

At about the same time, Major Benjamin Morgan Harrod, his wife, and his sister moved into an identical house next door to the Richardsons. This was certainly no coincidence. Major Harrod, who was a practicing architect as well as an engineer and a member of the Mississippi River Commission, was more likely than Henry to have found a bargain in this newly popular district. Both men found it convenient to coordinate their Mississippi River policies when they lived only a few steps apart. The two families grew closer over the years. Nannie and Mrs. Harrod got along well, and by the turn of the century, hardly a

week went by without the two couples exchanging tea-time visits. The Harrods, who had no children of their own, were fond of the Richardson children, and whenever the Richardsons had house guests, they would often send one or two children next door to free up a bedroom.[12]

When last seen, the Richardson family home remained well-maintained with attractive landscaping. The house is large and unpretentious, with a porch and gabled roof facing the street; it appears almost large enough for the 11 Richardsons. Nannie's younger brother Frederick, then a clerk with the Southern Pacific Company, lived with them briefly in 1886. Her bachelor brother, Thomas P. Farrar Jr., a bookkeeper, lived with them in 1890. The birth of their ninth child, Morgan, in 1891 must have squeezed the family because Tom was no longer with them when the City Directory appeared that year.[13]

A Middle-Class Housewife's Routine

Up to 1878, the archives contain considerable family correspondence. Henry's father saved many letters that Henry and Nannie wrote during this time. As Reverend Henry's health declined in later years, however, the gaps between letters grew longer. Starting in 1877, there were very few letters for the next two decades. It is easy to imagine how Nannie spent her time as the Richardson family grew. After the twins, Roger Wolcott and Henry Thurston, born in 1882, a second daughter, Anna Howard, was born on December 30, 1885. Then came three more sons: James Kempe, born December 5, 1887; Fred Howard Farrar, born September 12, 1889; and finally, Morgan Harrod, born February 21, 1891.[14]

In the 1890s, Nannie found time to keep a diary, and the several years still available provide a more detailed idea of household activities. For example:

> I have been busy all day fixing the children's shelves and drawers, and the armoire where sheets, pillow cases, towels, table clothes and napkins are put, and the never to be finished work of darning stockings and socks. All the children were off to school in time this morning, all but Morgan, who couldn't be persuaded to go.[15]

Of course, the household finances were her responsibility:

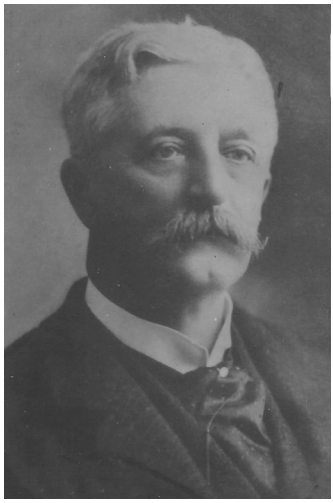
> H. left me $30.00 when he left and thought it was going to last me so long, but alas, money certainly takes wings and flies, and I fear the last of my $30.00 will have melted away before H. gets back. He left me the check book, but I don't want to apply to that.[16]

Managing the servants was a constant concern for Nannie. The "Memoranda" sections at the back of her diaries show that she had at least nine different house girls in 1897 and about ten in 1899. There were also two cooks in 1897 and four or five in 1899. Many years later, her son Fred said that he never saw his mother in the kitchen. Indeed, once, when one of the cooks did not show up, Nannie noted that they ate out of cans. The wage for each of their servants was $12 per month, but there is little information as to the hours or the workload. Presumably, most of these servants were Black; Nannie noted that one of the cooks was white, while commenting that she didn't cook very well. Nannie frequently noted the shortcomings of these servants, but never once did she make a comment that might be considered racist even by current standards.[17]

As the 19th century was about to end, Nannie felt it was appropriate to set down a few reflections on her role as a housewife and mother:

> I wanted to do a great many things today—write letters—straighten things up etc, etc, and wanted to go to church—that none of us did. In point of fact, I would have liked to do all the things I have left undone, and finish the things only begun, and to have set all my house in order decently as I would like it [done] were the last day of the year my last of life. But I know well enough that if we do not each moment's work, we can never make it up. This is most necessary—to use each moment of life rightly—not to put off till tomorrow the things to be done today—but how to know what things are best worth doing? What things are necessary to be done? For me to live rightly myself first—Then to train my children rightly—then to keep my house well ordered. Wishing to do them all, I yet do none. Good resolutions are of no avail. I used to make them every New Year—but never kept one. I fear the New Year that is coming will be as the ones gone before.[18]

Leisure and Social Life



Henry Brown Richardson, about 1895

New Orleans life was not all work at the turn of the century; even Nannie, with her nine children, found time to play. Nannie was an occasional opera and theatergoer. Lucy and Ned Farrar probably had a regular box at the French Opera House, and every winter, Lucy would send Nannie tickets for at least one performance. In February 1897, Henry accompanied her to the opera *Benvenuto* by Eugène Diaz. In January 1899, Nannie and Lucy attended a performance of Puccini's *Guillaume Tell*; their husbands, perhaps daunted by the four-hour length of the opera, did not accompany them, and escort duty fell upon Lucy's oldest son, Edgar Jr. Nannie enjoyed both of those performances, but in January 1900, she thought Ernest Reyer's *Salammbo* was "repulsive."

Most operagoers found an evening at the opera to be agreeable, no matter what was being performed, since the French Opera House was the center of New Orleans's social life at that time. The French Opera House, which opened in December 1859 at the corner of Toulouse and Bourbon Streets, was the first opera house in the United States; it burned down in 1919 and was never rebuilt.[19]

Anna Howard Farrar Richardson, about 1895.

Shopping downtown, usually for family clothing, was perhaps as much a chore as a diversion. Occasionally, Nannie would allow herself the luxury of shopping all day and lunch at the Cosmopolitan. The Cosmopolitan

Hotel was a fashionable meeting place that also featured a café-restaurant.[20]

One of the family's regular evening activities was reading aloud, most often from works of fiction but also from non-fiction. Usually, Henry Sr. or Nannie would read, and whoever was present in the living room would listen. Nannie's favorite author was Walter Scott, whose novels were immensely popular in Anglophone countries during the 19th century. One evening, after reading to her sister, Jennie, from Scott's *Waverley*, she wrote, "I love the man and his books."[21]

Historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown explains Scott's popularity:

> The ordinary white Southern farmer did not read Walter Scott's Ivanhoe and other historical novels, but the educated class avidly absorbed his work. In the same way that a film today gains a place in popular culture, language, and assumptions, antebellum steamboats, barges, stagecoaches, plantation houses, crossroads hamlets, slaves, and even children were named for characters and places to be found in one Scott tale or another. Southerners worshipped at the Abbotsford [Walter Scott's home] shrine because Scott's tales so well confirmed the ideals and virtues about manhood and valor that they already entertained.[22]

Nannie's former neighbors in Tensas Parish must have shared her literary tastes, considering the many plantations in the Parish that were named after estates or castles in Scott's novels.[23]

One civic event that the family attended was the annual outing of the Louisiana Engineering Society. The third such outing on October 19, 1901, was a family cruise for about 250 persons to enable the engineers, their families, and their guests to discover the Port of New Orleans. Henry, as Chief State Engineer, was more or less obliged to participate, as was his son John, who was Secretary of the Society in 1901. John must have rounded up as many family members as possible for the cruise: among his guests were Nannie, Anna, Henry Jr., Morgan, Mary Farrar, and Miss Elizabeth LeBourgeois, who was to become Mrs. John F. Richardson within a year.[24]

The biggest community events of the year were the Mardi Gras festivities, especially those organized by the Mistick Krewe of Comus. The Comus "Krewe" is one of several groups originally founded to sponsor participants in the annual Mardi Gras parades. The younger

boys would all want to see the parade, and Henry Sr. would accompany them. The Comus Krewe no longer participates in the parades, but invitations to their annual Comus Ball remain highly prized. Mary Richardson received an invitation in 1897, but she did not seem particularly active in New Orleans society, as her name appeared rarely in the social columns.[25]

Nannie was quite close to her sister-in-law, Lucy Farrar, whom she visited frequently. Lucy's husband, Ned, and Henry probably got along well, too, although their personality types were quite different. Ned was known for his outgoing personality, his enthusiasm, and his volubility. Henry, however, continued to be reserved in his personal contacts, so much so that one wonders if he and Lucy ever discovered that they had had a common personal friend in Lucy Breckinridge of Grove Hill, Virginia, who had admired both of them. (See Chapter 7.) On August 12, 1863, Lucy Breckinridge had written:

> On Sunday we all went to Sunday school. Mr. Godwin wants me to join his class. His sweetest scholar is little Lucie Stamps, a niece of President D's.[26]

And on October 8, 1863:

> I was standing down near the front gate … when I spied some ladies coming down the lane. I came into the house and told cousin Robert who went out to see who they were. They proved to be Judge and Mrs. Dixon from Alexandria, Mrs. Gen. [Benjamin G.] Humphreys, sister of President Davis, little Lilly H., Lucy Stamps, and Capt. Frank. They staid to tea and Ma sent them home in the carriage. Lucy Stamps is perfectly lovely. She was delighted when I told her she must come out Friday with Emma and stay until Sunday.[27]

This must have been a difficult time for the Stamps family; Lucy's father, Isaac Stamps, a Captain with the 21st Mississippi Regiment, was killed in the Battle of Gettysburg on July 2. When his widow learned of her husband's death, she was staying with Jefferson and Varina Davis in the Richmond White House.[28]

The Richardsons' nine children also visited back and forth with their ten Farrar cousins, and we can imagine the rollicking times they might

have had if all 18 of them ever got together. Because of the wide range of ages of the children, this rarely happened; at least, Nannie never mentioned such a gathering. From time to time, Nannie would stay with Lucy Farrar and their younger children at Pass Christian, a beach resort near Biloxi, Mississippi.[29]

Relations were a bit cooler with Nannie's younger brother Girault Farrar and his wife, Maud. Nannie found that Girault had a tiresome and negative outlook on life and that Maud was a snob. Maud seemed to feel that Girault was not providing properly for her and their children. Certainly, Girault's law practice never achieved the prestige or prosperity of his brother Ned's. Entries in the city directories suggest that he did not establish a lasting relationship with any law partner, and the frequent changes in his personal addresses also suggest that his financial situation was less than satisfactory. Girault Farrar was disbarred from practice before the Federal Courts in 1926.[30]

Nannie's diary mentions visits with several friends who seemed quite close, as well as others that could be called social obligations. In the latter category were calls on Varina Howell Davis, Nannie's first cousin once removed. Jefferson Davis's widow would come to New Orleans almost every year and stay at the St. Charles Hotel, where she would hold court for a fortnight. Lucy Farrar, Davis's niece, was one of the first to learn of Varina's visits. Ned Farrar was a co-executor of her husband's estate, and both he and Lucy had been close to the ex-president until his death in New Orleans on December 6, 1889. In any case, *The Times-Picayune* had a regular column showing recent arrivals at the city's better hotels, so all of Varina's friends, relatives, and connections from the Confederacy were expected to be aware of her presence and to pay their respects. Henry usually found some excuse not to accompany his wife on these visits, but Nannie seemed to enjoy them, always commenting respectfully in her diary on the state of Varina's mind and health.[31]

Meetings of the Round Table Club offered Henry an occasion to expand and cement his social and professional contacts. The meetings usually featured speakers on questions of civic interest, and Henry attended regularly with Major Harrod. Aside from his professional and family relationships, Henry probably had a relatively narrow social life. The name of Major Harrod, his good friend and neighbor, often appeared in the newspapers in connection with one association or another, but Henry's name appears almost exclusively in connection

with his professional duties. Henry probably had little time for social life. His professional life was demanding, and that was the way he liked it.[32]

New Orleans was not a very healthy place to live in the summer, and the family would often leave town. When the youngest children were toilet-trained, the whole family would even travel to Boston and Gilead, Maine, to stay with Henry's brother, John, or with his sister, Mary, and their mother. Nannie's mother went with them in 1884, perhaps to help take care of the twins, who were then only two years old. Nannie might spend some time with Lucy Farrar and their younger children at Pass Christian, a beach resort near Biloxi, Mississippi. She also visited nearby Biloxi beaches with Major and Mrs. Harrod.[33]

From time to time, Nannie would send one or more of the children to stay with relatives. As the summer heat descended on the city, the young people were glad to leave town. On June 20, 1896, Mary and Roger steamed northward on the *City of St. Louis*, presumably to stay with Jennie and Gus Bass at Myrtle Grove. They were accompanied by Tensas Parish residents Georgie and Bessie Goldman and Ann Rebecca "Babie" Smyth. Another favorite destination was St. Francisville, where Mary visited her Uncle Frederick Hillsman Farrar, her Aunt Mary, and their daughter, Belle Montgomery, in June 1893. Fred and Morgan also stayed with them during the Easter holiday in 1897, and Henry Jr. spent nearly two months with them during the summer of 1897.[34]

Nannie's correspondence occupied a great deal of her time. Nearly every day, she noted the letters she had received in her diary. She wrote most frequently to her sister, Jennie, at Myrtle Grove, and exchanged letters regularly with friends in Tensas Parish. One correspondent was Georgie Goldman. Georgia Goldman was probably a descendant of George W. Goldman, one of the early planters of Tensas Parish, whose son, George C. Goldman, had lent his name to the town of Goldman.[35]

On January 13, 1897, Nannie wrote, "Letter from Georgie today—says she had been to Wavertree, where she found them all sick—Babie in bed with a bad cough, Mrs. Bowman quite sick, so that she was uneasy about her." The Smyths of Wavertree Plantation near St. Joseph were among the Richardsons' close friends in Tensas. John Smyth Sr., an engineer, was also Henry's professional associate. After Henry moved to New Orleans as Chief State Engineer, Smyth took his place as the Assistant Engineer resident in St. Joseph. Smyth had become the owner of Wavertree Plantation through his

marriage to Rebecca Bowman, the adopted daughter of the plantation's founder, Elam Bowman, and his wife, Barbara. Nannie was also concerned about their health and welfare. On April 17, 1897, during the high water season, she wrote, "He [Henry Sr.] says the Biggs Crevasse of which we heard this a.m. will overflow the back of Tensas—so the Smyths will be overflowed. I am so sorry for them and others. Hope Mr Bass will escape serious damage." On January 22, 1900, Nannie wrote at some length about the elder John Smyth's illness. Her concern was justified because Smyth died on March 29, 1900.[36]

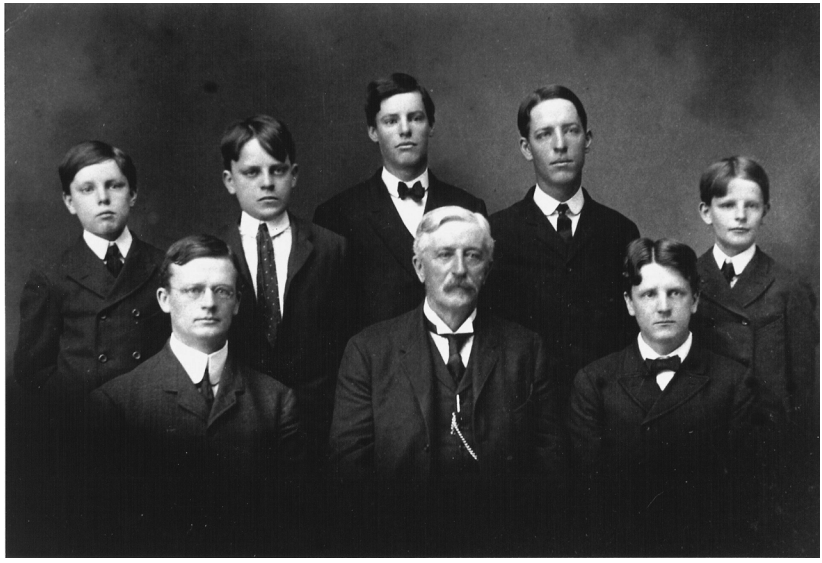
John Smyth Jr., a medical student in New Orleans, was a frequent visitor at the Richardson home from 1897 to 1899. He was a student at Tulane Medical School at the same time as Thomas Farrar Richardson, but two or three years behind him. The Richardsons attended John's commencement exercises on May 2, 1900, when he received his MD degree. The family later called on him to care for members of the family, but he was not their regular doctor.[37]

The year 1897 was a difficult one for Nannie and for all of New Orleans. The problems began with unusually cold weather in January. Most of the family was in bed with bad colds or "grippe" at one time or another for the rest of the winter. As spring approached, heavy rains fell not only in Louisiana but also in the North, resulting in record Mississippi River flood levels. This meant that Henry Sr. was traveling most of that spring to supervise urgent repairs to the levees. Henry's assiduity would lead him to take long rides on horseback through the cold and rain. Despite his exposure to harsh weather, he looked "remarkably healthy" when he returned to New Orleans.[38]

Henry Sr. and Major Harrod were planning to attend a meeting of the American Society of Civil Engineers in Québec in June 1897. This was especially important for the Harrods because Major Harrod was President of the Society that year. Mrs. Harrod would accompany them, and Henry wanted Nannie to go, too. Nannie was reluctant, even though Jennie offered to take the children at Myrtle Grove during her absence. Henry would take advantage of the trip to visit his mother and sister in Gilead, Maine, and his brother near Boston, as he often did during trips to the Northeast. Nannie rarely forewent the chance for such a trip, but this time she decided to stay home. She never gave a clear reason for her decision, but it seems to have been a combination of her fatigue from a difficult winter and spring, her concern about the chil-

dren's behavior, and her desire to catch up on household maintenance that had fallen behind schedule.[39]

In September 1897, several cases of yellow fever were reported in New Orleans. Ned Farrar feared an epidemic and put his entire family on board a steamer bound for New York, a luxury that the Richardsons could not always afford. Fortunately, the dreaded disease did not reach epidemic proportions that year. Later in the year, however, many cases of diphtheria were reported in New Orleans, which led Nannie to keep the children home from school. Throughout her diaries, Nannie often wrote about the health, education, and character traits of her nine children. Although they frequently had colds and contracted mumps and measles, none of them appeared to have suffered any serious illnesses during childhood. She expected the children to do their best in school, and they usually did. She would meet with the teachers in the public schools where Henry Jr. and the younger boys were enrolled and with the teachers at the private girls' school that Anna attended.[40]



Clockwise from Top Left: Fred, Kempe, Henry, Roger, Morgan, John, Henry Brown Richardson, and Farrar, about 1900; Courtesy of LSU Hill Library.

Nannie never mentioned religious education. Thomas Farrar, Mary, and John were baptized in St. Joseph's Episcopal Church, and perhaps the younger ones were baptized in New Orleans. Henry seemed to have abandoned church-going completely, except perhaps for weddings and

baptisms. Had he been put off by the ceremony of Episcopal churches, so different from the Congregational simplicity in which he was raised? Or was it simply a reaction against an overdose of religion in his youth? In any case, he had apparently decided that religious questions were a social matter best left to the women of the family. Mary and Anna went to the nearby St. George's Episcopal Church, although perhaps not regularly, since Nannie found it worthy of mention when they did go. Nannie herself seems to have gone to church only rarely, although she wrote on one Sunday that she had wanted to go but didn't, and no one else did either. There is no mention of the boys attending church; on Sundays, the younger boys often went out for a walk with their father.[41]

Leaving the Nest

Nannie and Henry's oldest son, Thomas Farrar Richardson, or Farrar as he was known, was a source of particular pride. He was born on September 28, 1871. Farrar earned his MD degree from Tulane in 1897 and served his internship at Charity Hospital in New Orleans. He first considered a specialization in surgery, but in 1899, he decided to enter the Marine Hospital Service, the organization that later became the U.S. Public Health Service. In February, Farrar went to Chicago, where he took a nationwide entry examination lasting several days. He passed the examination with the highest score among all applicants, and the following week, he received a telegram from the Surgeon General offering him a position in New York, which he readily accepted. Nannie noted all this with pride in her diary.[42]

Meanwhile, Farrar had become engaged to marry Corinne Louise Toledano, a young lady from one of New Orleans's oldest families. Corinne, who would be 17 on March 15, 1899, had graduated with honors from a private high school in June 1898. The exact date of their betrothal is uncertain, but on New Year's Day, 1899, Farrar brought two photos of Corinne to Nannie, who noted that they didn't do her justice.[43]

This must have been a whirlwind romance; only a month before, Farrar seemed completely absent from Corinne's future:

> Numbered among this winter's handsome debutantes will be Miss Corinne Toledano. Miss Toledano will make her formal bow to the social world at the Louisiana Club cotillion Dec. 2, when she will dance with Mr. Wm. Maginnis. Miss Toledano is a hand-

> some girl, with a graceful and erect carriage, large and lustrous black eyes and the soft and cream-like complexion peculiar to the Creole type.[44]

Relations between the two families developed normally, with an exchange of visits among the ladies beginning when Corinne and her mother came to visit Nannie on January 10. Farrar's assignment in New York opened up new perspectives to those who might have assumed he would settle down and practice medicine in New Orleans. Farrar and Corinne decided that he would go to New York first, begin his new job, and find a place for them to live after their marriage, which they tentatively set for June.[45]

As the marriage date approached, however, Nannie seemed to grow despondent:

> Estrangements are the saddest things in life—for they are not necessary. And separations from those we love—how hard they are to bear! It is so hard for me to have Farrar so far from me and I know that in all human probability—I may never again be with him except for a little time. And his marriage will be—must be—some thing of a barrier between us.[46]

Nannie seemed to have no misgivings about the 11-year difference in ages between Farrar and Corinne; after all, Henry was nine years older than she was. Nor did Farrar's conversion to Roman Catholicism seem to bother her. Clearly, her problem was that she was losing her oldest son to another woman.

The constraints of Farrar's new job made it impossible to prepare for the wedding with the usual advance notice. Finally, he obtained a few days' leave, and the couple set the date for Saturday, July 8, in St. Augustin's Church. There was no time to print and send invitations, but the families were able to spread the word informally, and the church was packed to overflowing. After a reception at the Toledano's home, the newlyweds set off by train for a brief honeymoon in Chicago. Once in New York, the couple had only a few days to enjoy the city before Farrar received notice of his new assignment, and before the end of July, he and Corinne were on their way to Cuba.[47]

Combat on the island during the Spanish-American War had ended in August 1898, but nearly a year later, the "temporary" American

administration was still struggling against a more elusive enemy. During the war, at least five times more American soldiers died from disease than in armed combat. In 1899, a yellow fever epidemic was raging across the island, and several doctors from the Marine Hospital Service were sent to help the Army Medical Department fight the epidemic. As a participant in this struggle, Farrar had the privilege of serving under Dr. Henry Rose Carter, Chief Quarantine Officer in Havana, whose research on incubation periods laid the basis for proof that the mosquito was the sole vector of infection for yellow fever. Had the MHS and army doctors had this proof in 1899, they would certainly have concentrated their efforts on mosquito control from the beginning. As it was, real progress in the fight against yellow fever had to await the conclusions of the Walter Reed Yellow Fever Commission, which appeared two years later.[48]

Dr. Richardson did not remain in Cuba long enough to participate in this victory. On September 22, Nannie learned from Surgeon General Wyman that Farrar had come down with a mild case of yellow fever and was recovering. The lack of news during the next fortnight was particularly stressful for Nannie. Already, she had been complaining to her diary that Corinne did not write to her often enough. Although Corinne was perfectly bilingual, she wrote to her mother in French and was perhaps less comfortable writing in English. Fortunately, on October 3, Nannie received a short letter from Farrar confirming his recovery. Farrar wrote at greater length a month later. Still, Nannie was not happy that Corinne was planning to return to New Orleans for Mardi Gras; she felt that Corinne's place was with her husband. As it turned out, both Farrar and Corinne were back on the mainland before the end of the year, when Farrar was placed in charge of the Reedy Island, Delaware, Quarantine Station.[49]

The young couple's return from Cuba should have been a good omen for the New Year, but Nannie was still resisting happiness:

> I suppose I ought to feel I have had many blessings, but Farrar's marriage and going away has been a great sorrow—so that its shadow is over the whole year. John is away at Wavertree—my dear boy—I hope he is happy—Farrar, I often feel I shall never see again, but I dare not let myself dwell on it. All together except my dear son Farrar and my dear boy John. Dear old year Goodbye.[50]

Yet she could not help but dwell on this separation. On January 18, she wrote:

> I felt very low-spirited after my visit [to the Toledano residence]-whenever I go down town I always feel so. To pass near the church Farrar was married in is an absolute pain to me. I always realize to the utmost how we are separated-and that I am never again to be to him as I once was. I am divided from him by worse than distance—his wife doesn't care for me two straws—she can not. I have always felt it. She no doubt tries to make herself believe she does, for she thinks it is her duty—but really I am nothing to her. I call myself to task in vain, and Mary scolds me in her precious way that is better than another's word of praise—but the shadow of French town weighs me down mightily.[51]

The pain of separation was all the more acute because Farrar seemed to be passing over to another culture. A week later, after attending the American première of Reyer's Opera, *Salammbo*, Nannie wrote, "The story is repulsive as most French stories are." Nannie's was a minority opinion; the following performances were well-attended, and the opera received favorable reviews in both major newspapers, although the *Picayune*'s critic thought it would "never become popular with the ordinary run of opera goers." The storyline of *Salammbo*, based on the novel by Gustave Flaubert, is exotic, to say the least, and apparently disturbing to one whose favorite storyteller was Sir Walter Scott. But surely, Nannie would have been less repulsed by this evening at the opera, had she not been so weighed down by the shadow of French town, and by her separation from her oldest son.[52]

If Nannie was on the brink of a depression during that winter, the shadow began to lift as spring drew near. As early as March 25, she could write, "the bignonia is full of buds." With eight other offspring to claim her attention, she could not spend all her time mourning Farrar's absence. Among other distractions, there were Fred's measles, Roger's problems at college, and John's prospects for a new job. Then, on May 28, she learned that Corinne had suffered a miscarriage. Perhaps this news brought back memories of the first childless years of her own marriage and finally aroused a bit of empathy for her son's very young bride, who was so far from her own family. In any case, there were no

more complaints about Corinne, and by June 20, Nannie and Henry were on their way to Reedy Island.[53]

Soon after they arrived, Farrar gave them a special tour. At that time, all boats arriving from abroad were obliged to pass inspection at the Quarantine Station on the Island before proceeding to Philadelphia or other ports up the Delaware River.[54]

While fulfilling his official duties, Farrar was able to treat his parents to a short cruise on the station's small boat, the *Powhattan*:

> [A] liner was in sight, the *Waesland* from Antwerp, with emigrants, so we called at the station, took Dr. Goldberger aboard, and steamed down to meet her. Farrar and Dr. G. boarded her, and we alongside looked up at the numerous passengers, and they looked down at us. The emigrants were examined, everybody was well, and the *Waesland* went on her way rejoicing, while we came back to supper on Reedy Island.[55]

Dr. Joseph Goldberger, who was later known for his research on the cause of pellagra, was Farrar's deputy at the Quarantine Station. During her visit, Nannie mentioned him often in her diary, which suggests that she may have taken a motherly interest in him. As the youngest child of Hungarian immigrants, Dr. Goldberger was perhaps not yet completely at ease in his social contacts with an American middle-class family. When he joined the Richardsons for a game of croquet, Nannie noted that he had never played before. Later that year, Goldberger met the young lady who would become his wife. Mary Farrar, who came to Reedy Island to visit her Aunt Nannie and cousin Farrar. She was then just 17, and five years would pass before Goldberger would pay her court in New Orleans.[56]

Henry soon left the island to attend a meeting in New York, and later went to Boston to see his brother. He was back in New Orleans by mid-July, but Nannie stayed in the North all summer.[57]

On July 13, Nannie wrote about an exciting official event:

> The revenue cutter with Surgeon General Wyman and other distinguished persons came down to the station about half past two. Farrar had the big flag that was up on July 4th run up instead of our small every day affair. And the *Powhattan* had a flag behind as well as before-and the station sent up the national

> ensign as well as the yellow USMHC flag, and Fess had all the signal flags flying from the tower. Farrar went out on the *Powhattan* to meet the Surgeon Gen. He thought they wouldn't come over here but after inspecting the station, we saw them going to the big boat, so Corinne and I flew around and got into our good clothes, and were ready to be presented to Gen. Wyman, Senator Penrose, and Mr. Ross of something or other. The Surgeon General is a little fat man who reminded me of Mr Garrett.[58]

On July 16, after hearing that Henry's mother was very ill and not expected to live, Nannie left for Gilead, Maine, via Boston and Portland and was with the Peabody family when Eunice Thurston Richardson died on August 4, 1900. Before leaving Gilead, she recovered Henry's old letters, which his father had saved. On the way back to Reedy Island, she stopped to spend a week with Henry's brother, John, and his family at Belmont, a suburb of Boston, and while there, visited Uncle Samuel Thurston in nearby Melrose Highlands. When back with Corinne and Farrar, she took the time to read some of Henry's letters and wrote, "I read over H.'s old letters to Mother and Father—some of them, and thought as I always have that no one could write such letters." Early in September, she headed for home by boat from New York on September 8, 1900.[59]

Nannie had nothing to complain about in her diary during her time with Corinne and Farrar. If she needed any further motivation to accept her daughter-in-law as a member of the family, it came two years later with the birth of her first grandchild, Eunice Thurston Richardson, on June 13, 1902. A week later, she was on her way to Reedy Island again, this time in a private train compartment that her second son, John, had paid for.[60]

John may have had a good reason to send his mother out of town. At that moment, he was courting his future bride and was having a hard time persuading her that they should not wait to marry. Different members of his family and hers were giving conflicting advice, and he may well have figured that he could plead his case more effectively with less outside interference. As it turned out, he was right, but this story should start at the beginning. John Francis Richardson was born on March 21, 1876, in St. Joseph and was named after his father's brother.[61]

There are few records of his early years, but years later, his mother wrote:

> John's 23rd birthday. I have been recalling his birth, his babyhood and his sweet childhood. I don't think there was ever a more beautiful and winning child. His face so sweet and bright and sunny, yet at times so thoughtful and earnest. My dear boy, may his life be bright and happy and may "every good and perfect gift" be his. He is a dear, dear son.[62]

John graduated from Tulane University on June 17, 1897, after taking a scientific course in the College of Arts and Sciences. While at Tulane, he seems to have been a member of every possible Club and Society, including the Sigma Chi Fraternity, the Tulane Athletic Club, the Tennis Club, the New Literary Club, and the Drama Club. He also played left end on his Junior Class football team. His busy social life did not distract him from his studies, at least not during his Senior year, when Nannie noted that his report was "very good indeed."[63]

Even before graduation, John had taken the Civil Service examination. Soon afterward, however, he began his career in civil engineering by starting from the ground up as a rodman. Nannie did not specify who he was working for, but his father's connections would ensure he gained the experience he needed. In any case, he spent the rest of the year mostly away from New Orleans.[64]

John worked his way up, gaining practical knowledge during the next three years, and was ready for a major advance in his career. On May 22, 1900, Nannie wrote, "John has begun his work for the Drainage Co. I hope he will get a good salary.… He is one of the three assistants. Mr. Earle is Chief Engineer." George T. Earle was at that time, Chief Engineer of the Sewerage and Water Board; the functions of the Drainage Commission were merged with the Sewerage and Water Board only in 1903. By that time, John was First Assistant Engineer in the Water Department, with a salary of $225 per month. John must have started at a lower salary in 1900, but he had a good, steady job, with a prestigious organization. He could then turn his thoughts to the question of marriage.[65]

Among all of Henry and Nannie's children, John was the one who visited Myrtle Grove Plantation the most often. In time, John became the favorite among his Aunt Jennie's nephews, and as he grew older, he

found an additional attraction up in Tensas Parish. As his younger brother told it many years later, "John used to like it up there [Myrtle Grove].… Then he fell in love with that girl, Ann Rebecca Smyth. So John used to go up there to Waterproof every chance he'd get."[66]

The youngest of the Smyth family of Waverly Plantation, Annie Rebecca (Babie) Smyth, was a particular favorite of the Richardsons. Babie Smyth was not only beautiful but also had a sweet disposition. In February 1897, Nannie's sister, Jennie, brought Babie with her on an extended visit to New Orleans. Mary Richardson and her classmates at Newman College found Babie to be such a beauty that they invited her to pose for portraits in their art class. Babie stayed with the Richardsons during part of her visit. On March 22, Nannie wrote, "Babie came over to stay some with Mary, and we all love to have her with us—even the children—even Anna is gentled down by Babie's presence…."[67]

Two years later, after a visit to Wavertree, Nannie's opinion had not changed: "Babie is still the same precious child." By the summer of 1900, John Richardson had become one of her most ardent admirers. John spent the better part of July 1900 in Tensas Parish and made several visits to Wavertree, her family's plantation, to pay court to Babie Smyth. John's charm and persuasive skills were of no avail, and his courtship was unsuccessful. He was despondent during the autumn and did not recover his good spirits until the end of the year:[68]

> And how changed John is. That is not a sad change for me, however! For I knew his affection for Babie was hopeless, and bound to end for him in disappointment—and he had been so unhappy over it—had never spared himself in her service, and got so little reward for his devotion. So it is rather a happy change for me.[69]

By abandoning his pursuit of the elusive Babie, however, John surely spared himself further heartbreak; before another year had passed, Babie Smyth, perhaps too precious for this world, was no longer among the living. Babie died on October 26, 1901.[70]

On November 21, 1900, Nannie wrote, "John is getting more and more interested in Lizzie. I am glad to see he can be interested in some other girl, for I don't think Babie treats him right." Elizabeth (Lizzie) Charless LeBourgeois seemed a much better choice for John. As a student at Newcomb College when she met John, she was at least John's

cultural and intellectual equal. Lizzie was a sorority sister and a close friend of Mary Farrar.[71]

When Mary introduced Lizzie to her Aunt Nannie, the conversation must have begun something like this:

Mary began, "Aunt Nannie, I'd like you to meet my friend Lizzie LeBourgeois."

Nannie, keeping the ambiance informal, replied, "How do you do, Lizzie."

To which Lizzie, knowing no other name, responded, "How do you do, Aunt Nannie."

After which, the three of them laughed, and Lizzie, sensing that the term of address, "Aunt Nannie," showed just the right mix of respect and familiarity, kept on using it.[72]

Lizzie adopted the Richardson family right away. John, however, did not display any particular interest in Lizzie during the first few months of their acquaintance. That began to change as he recovered from his infatuation with Babie Smyth. At least, that is what Nannie thought: "John is falling in love with Lizzie. I hope it will be mutual."[73]

Perhaps it was Lizzie who took the initiative. Nearly a year before Nannie noticed John's romantic interest, Lizzie invited him to be her dancing partner at a "German" at Newcomb Hall on January 4, 1900. The German cotillion, which was popular in New Orleans at that time, is a dance in which one couple leads the others through a more or less elaborate set of figures with a frequent exchange of partners. This particular German was given for the residents of the Newcomb College women's dormitory, most of whom joined in the dancing. Lizzie's brother Bush LeBourgeois was also among the dancers as the partner of Cecilia Leonard, another of Lizzie's sorority sisters.[74]

Lizzie had graduated from Newcomb in June 1900 with a degree in Modern Language but took courses in the Art Department as a Special Student during the following year, which enabled her to continue living in the student dormitory. John probably continued courting Lizzie during the rest of 1901, although Nannie's diary is not available for confirmation. John was at least able to persuade Lizzie and Mary Farrar to join him on the Engineering Society's family cruise in October 1901, and there must have been other, more intimate occasions for them to be together.[75]

A respectable suitor had to court not only the young lady but also her family. The LeBourgeois were a long-established family of sugar

planters who had never quite recovered their losses after the Civil War and emancipation. Fortunately, Lizzie's father, Charless LeBourgeois, was able to supplement his revenues by obtaining a position as inspector of Chinese imports at the New Orleans Customs House. Lizzie's mother had died when she was quite young, and her father had only recently remarried. Thus, it was also important for John to win the favor of Lizzie's great-grandmother, Charlotte Charless, who had raised Lizzie, her two brothers, and her sister. Since John had a good job, a bright future, and a winning nature, he probably won the family's approval without difficulty.[76]

In January 1902, Lizzie left to visit her wealthy aunt and uncle, Martha and Herbert Wadsworth, in Washington, DC. Near the beginning of her stay, she confessed to Nannie that she was not completely happy having to participate in her aunt's active social life:

> Darling Aunt Nannie,
>
> Every afternoon we go out calling, calling! Oh! And dress and undress! Truly it is "weary, stale, flat and unprofitable" as a certain very dear person would say. But speaking of John he rarely writes and I don't think it's fair, do you? I am worried that he thinks he has consumption or heart disease! The last letter he wrote was wildly pessimistic—you know the type and very full of dark hints of atheism, "bitter philosophy," etc. If he could just get beaten into his mind that Christianity is the only safeguard against gloom, how silvery a lining his clouds of doubt would acquire….[77]

Nevertheless, Lizzie seemed to develop a taste for the social whirl of the nation's capital, so much so that she stayed on until mid-April. By that time, John was nearly frantic, particularly since Lizzie was planning to leave on a European tour with her aunt in July. As soon as she returned to New Orleans, he began a desperate campaign to convince her that they had already waited long enough to marry. One of his ploys was to bring in other family members to support his arguments, but this tactic backfired when his father told Lizzie that "… it would be good for John to wait—poor John—and to do just as she pleased." Nannie's support also wavered; even after noting that John seemed depressed, she wrote, "Lizzie and he are young and can wait with advantage to both." A few days later, John's prospects had not improved: "John fainted dead away today in his office—from the effects of smoking—he

has promised to give it up, but I fear he won't." On May 20, the absolute end seemed near when Nannie wrote simply, "Lizzy came to say goodbye."[78]

At about this time, John sent his mother away to see her new grandchild on Reedy Island. Paying for her train compartment was just the sort of generous gesture that John was wont to make for his family members. Nonetheless, it is possible that he wished to clear the field of extraneous players in order to mount a final direct campaign to win Lizzie's assent. Be that as it may, on July 1, after Nannie had reached the Island, John's brother Farrar received a letter from Lizzie announcing that she and John were engaged.[79]

After lengthy consultations with members of Lizzie's family in the East, the wedding date was set for Monday, October 6. Nannie helped John find a suitable house to rent just west of the Garden District. John was so busy making the house livable that he forgot to buy clothes for the wedding until the very last minute.[80]

John may have had problems preparing his new home because of the New Orleans streetcar strike that began on September 27. Since the workers and middle-class residents were left without their normal means of transportation, enterprising drayage men and even fruit and vegetable peddlers put their wagons, carts, and horses to work hauling passengers. This meant that wagons for the delivery of items such as furniture and provisions were in short supply. Carriages for hire were also in great demand, which was troubling, especially for out-of-town visitors. There must have been complaints, but everyone seemed to accept the inconvenience with good humor. Fortunately, there was no violence until October 8, after the wedding, when the company attempted to run streetcars operated by out-of-town strikebreakers.[81]

When Lizzie's sister and cousin arrived from the east, they each remarked on how calm, composed, and happy the bride seemed. Lizzie showed no doubts or regrets about her decision to give up her European tour in favor of marriage.[82]

On the Saturday before the wedding, John's Uncle Ned and Aunt Lucy hosted a prenuptial dinner for the bridal party in their impressive mansion on St. Charles Avenue. Initial contacts between the two families seemed to go well, except that Lizzie's wealthy aunt, Martha Wadsworth, who was seated near her, hardly exchanged two words with her during the entire evening. Nannie was sensitive to such perceived snubs, but nothing further came of it.[83]

Newcombe chapel was crowded with a representative and fashionable gathering of friends and relatives Monday evening, to witness the marriage of Miss Elizabeth Le Bourgeois to Mr. John Francis Richardson. Graceful drooping palms and ferns placed within the chancel formed a bower like effect. Cut flowers rested on the alter, lectern and pulpit and banked the sills of the mullioned windows at the rear of the sanctuary. Promptly at the hour appointed, 8 o'clock, the bridal procession entered to the grand march from the "Le Prophet". The ushers and groomsmen, Messrs. Henry Blow Le Bourgeois, Henry Baldwin, Phil Gidiere, Victor Visoea, Douglas Forsyth, William Huger, Dick Murphy, Dr. Sam Logan, walking in couples, advanced up the aisle, leading the way, followed by the bridesmaids, Miss Mary Richardson, sister of the bridegroom; Miss Nelka de Smernoff, of New York, cousin of the bride; Miss Mary Farrar, and the maid of honor, sister of the bride, Miss Lucretia Blow Le Bourgeois, of New York. The bride was accompanied to the altar by her father, Mr. J. Charless Le Bourgeois, the bridegroom awaiting her coming with his best man, Mr. Bush Le Bourgeois, her brother. Rev. Beverley Warner performed the impressive ceremony according to the Episcopal ritual, during which soft music formed a subdued accompaniment to the sacred words. The bridesmaids were very becomingly and daintily gowned in white organdy and lace, with white satin ribbons. Tiny wreaths of green leaves were worn in the hair and great clusters of white roses and carnations carried. The bride looked as if she had stepped from an old picture. She wore the wedding dress of her grandmother Le Bourgeois, a rich, white, lustrous satin brocade, made with very full skirt, just touching the floor, the low-necked and short sleeved, tight-fitting corsage trimmed with bertha of rare old lace and filled in about the neck and arms with guimpe and sleeves of filmy tulle. The old-fashioned pearl necklace of her great grandmother encircled her throat, and the delicate lace and pearl fan she carried had been used by her mother at her own wedding. A long veil of illusion completely enveloped her slender figure. A bouquet of bride roses completed the quaint, old-fashioned costume. After the church ceremony, a reception, limited to the relatives and most intimate friends, was held at the home of the young bridal couple, which was very beautifully and elaborately decorated for the

> occasion with growing ferns, palms and pink roses. One of the honored guests at the reception was the bride's great-grandmother, Mrs. C.T. Charless. The bridal couple, who received many handsome presents, are in their own home, 4306 Prytania Street, between Berlin and Napoleon Avenue.[84]

After the reception, John and Lizzie left for a brief honeymoon at Pass Christian. Thus began one of the happiest, albeit the shortest, marriages that the Richardsons' children were to know.

Meanwhile, another son was coming of age and claiming Nannie's and Henry's attention. Roger Wolcott Richardson and Henry Thurston Richardson were born on November 30, 1882. Henry Sr. was proud of his ancestor, Roger Wolcott, colonial Governor of Connecticut, and author of the first published volume of poetry in the New England colonies. (See Chapter 3.) When the twins were born, his parents feared that Henry might not survive. Roger was bigger and more robust than his twin, and later, he was at least a year ahead of him in school.[85]

When Roger reached secondary school in the public system, his grades were good enough that he was considered the brains of the family. When he was 15, his parents began to think of sending him to a private school in Tennessee. Nannie confided to her diary, "Lucy gave me the Sewanee catalog…. I fear the expense of sending Roger there will be greater than we can afford." Nevertheless, Henry decided to send Roger there for at least a year. Lucy Farrar had the Sewanee catalog handy because she and Ned had sent their oldest son, Edgar Jr., to school there. At that time, Sewanee College included preparatory courses at the secondary school level, in which Roger enrolled in the third form. Sewanee College, now known as The University of the South, was founded in 1857 by Southern leaders of the Episcopal Church as a school intended to be free from Northern influences.[86]

Shortly before Roger left for Sewanee, Mrs. Harrod, who had no children of her own, made an offer to Nannie, which showed just how close the two families had become:

> She told me in the kindest most delicate way of her and Major Harrod's wish to help us pecuniarily about Roger's school expenses, and I acknowledged that it would be necessary for us to be as economical as possible in order to send him, but that we could pull through if all went well, and I told her there was no

> one on earth to whom we would as soon go to for help of that kind as to them, but hoped we should be able to get along. It was kind and generous of them to make the offer.[87]

Roger began his first term "…studying Algebra, French, Ancient History, Grammar, Physical Geography, but says nothing about Latin, which his Father and I want him to study." Two months later, Roger decided to drop French. Nevertheless, his reports were very good in May and fairly good in August. At first, Roger wrote home frequently, but Nannie later complained that he wasn't writing often enough.[88]

Family information for 1898 is scarce because Nannie's diary for that year has not been found. Nevertheless, Roger probably continued his preparatory courses at Sewanee since he returned there at the college level in March 1899. All went reasonably well until August, when the Dean wrote that Roger was not studying and could not keep up with Latin at the advanced level. He suggested that Roger change his course of study, but his father did not agree. At the end of September, Roger was suspended for failure to attend chapel and required classes.[89]

By October 6, Roger had returned to New Orleans, and with John's help, he was able to enter Tulane as a Freshman. He chose a scientific orientation and joined in activities such as the Tulane Athletic Association and the class football team. If his parents thought that this fresh start would help Roger solve his problems, they were soon disappointed, as shown by successive entries in Nannie's diary for 1900:[90]

> January 18, "I am very much worried by Roger saying he is going to quit school and go to work."
>
> January 22, "Roger went to see his Uncle Raulty [Girault Farrar, a lawyer], who said he thought he could get him a job in the PCRR office. I feel so uneasy and worried about my poor boy's future. It is so hard to reach him in any way."
>
> January 30, "H. got duplicates of his reports today. He failed in every examination."[91]

Years later, Roger's brother Kempe called Roger "the black sheep of the family," based on his disappointing experience with higher education. That judgment, however, raises the question of why Roger enrolled in his course of study at Sewanee. Roger may have been attempting to follow the example set by his cousin Edgar Howard Farrar Jr. Edgar had

studied at Sewanee as a stepping-stone to the University of Virginia and ultimately to a career as a lawyer. If Henry and Nannie had similar aspirations for Roger, that would explain why they were willing to bear the expense of a private school education that they had not found necessary for Farrar or John. Although Nannie never expressed such a desire in her diary, it would have pleased her to have one of her sons carry on a family tradition by pursuing a career in the law. Roger had done so well in the public school system that his parents were convinced he could complete the studies necessary for such a career. Whether Roger, at age 15, had any firm career plans of his own is an open question, but he apparently had no objection to his parents' proposal. Three difficult years at Sewanee, however, convinced him that he was not suited for whatever program his parents had planned and discouraged him from pursuing any studies at the university level.[92]

By the end of March 1900, Roger began work as a surveyor. His father had found a place for him as a rodman with the State Engineers, where he could learn his profession from the ground up. Still, Roger was not quite ready to settle down. On January 1, 1902, he lent further credence to his epithet of "black sheep," when he was arrested for Malicious Mischief at the intersection of Bienville and Basin Streets on the complaint of one Bertha Golden. Nannie may never have known about this; she did not mention it in her diary. Roger was apparently discharged later in the day, but this incident may have convinced him to mend his ways. On June 30, 1902, Nannie wrote, "Josie, Roger's friend, called on me, and Mary and I were much pleased with her." Roger and Josephine Pettit were married not long afterward, but no marriage record has been found.[93]

Tragedy and Felicity

On the morning of May 7, 1903, John Richardson had just brought his young wife breakfast in their room when she suddenly cried out and fell unconscious on the floor. He was able to bring their doctor to her side almost immediately, but to no avail. At the funeral in St. Louis, he told Lizzie's aunt, Martha Wadsworth what had happened, and she wrote the following account to a friend:

> [T]he doctor found she had dislocated her neck, the vertebrae near the neck being all affected by necrosis, a condition which

> must have been coming on for some time without any symptoms. It appears that had she lived she would probably have had paralysis and I am glad she herself knew nothing of the nearness of death. She was eating her breakfast upstairs as she hadn't been well for a few days, nothing serious according to the doctor but just a run down condition from having done too much which culminated in a fainting spell, after which she stayed in bed for, as I said, a few days. The doctor had told her to go out and get fresh air and she was going to dress immediately feeling perfectly well, when suddenly she had an attack of nausea and in the midst cried out, "oh my neck" and fell back. The doctor who happily was in the next house tried everything but she died in half an hour without regaining consciousness. I hope she was spared suffering, it is the only comfort to think of. Her life was so happy and full that it seems incredible that she should die so young.[94]

At the funeral services in St. Louis, John shared his grief with Lizzie's aunts, Susan Blow and Martha Wadsworth. Lizzie was also mourned by many in New Orleans, where the following remembrance appeared in *The Times-Picayune*:

> Her numerous friends in this city were shocked and grieved beyond description by the sudden death, yesterday, at her home here, of Mrs. John Francis Richardson, who was the brilliant and charming Elizabeth Charless Le Bourgeois. She graduated at Newcomb in June, 1900, and was married to Mr. Richardson in October 1902. Lovely in her life as in form and feature, lovable in every trait and characteristic, and beloved by all who knew her, she passed away at the age of 22 years, extinguishing, by her untimely demise, the sunshine in light in not a few lives. Gentle and sweet be her sleep.[95]

The sunshine and light in John's life were extinguished for many months. Even 40 years later, during a second happy marriage, he could not bear to speak of Lizzie, and his younger descendants never knew of his first marriage until genealogical research became possible on the internet. The other members of the Richardson family, who had adopted Lizzie even before her marriage, mourned her as well. Anna, especially, seemed deeply affected and would name her first daughter after Lizzie.

Nannie, too, must have been badly shaken, but a new and happy event at least partially eased her sadness.

Nannie had already begun to plan for the marriage of her older daughter, Mary Wolcott Richardson. Mary was born on October 26, 1873, in St. Joseph. Very little is known about her childhood or her early education. The 1880 census records do not show whether she had a governess or if she went to school when she lived in St. Joseph. In New Orleans, she probably went to a private girls' school for her elementary and secondary studies, as did her sister, Anna.[96]

By the time Mary reached her 20s, she had begun to study art. During the winter of 1897, Mary took painting lessons with a certain Mr. Molinaro, and it seems she had previously taken lessons from him. In the autumn of 1897, when she was nearly 24 years old, she enrolled in the Art Department of Newcomb College and took the Normal Art Course. During her early years at Newcomb, she was not very active socially, but the Jambalaya 1900 yearbook showed that she was Secretary of the Art School, a member of the Art Students Club, and a member of the Literary Society. During that year. She received her diploma in Art on June 19, 1901, and continued as a graduate student in Art at Newcomb during the following term.[97]

Mary met William Henry Rasche during a visit with friends in Virginia in 1902. Will was a professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute (now Virginia Tech). Their relationship grew through correspondence during the year, and Will came to New Orleans to continue his courtship during the December holidays. The couple announced their engagement on Christmas Day, 1902, and planned to marry in June. This was to be a second Marriage for Will. His first wife, Florence Green, had died on February 5, 1901, leaving Will with a son, Robert Clifton Rasche, not quite five years old. Robert was being cared for by a close family relative. This arrangement was working quite well, and Will had not planned for Robert to join his new household after his marriage. Mary and Will would make their home in Blacksburg, Virginia, near VPI, now Virginia Tech, where Will became known as an innovative Professor of Mechanical Engineering.[98]

Lizzie's sudden death in May had thrown the whole family into mourning, which placed Nannie and Mary in a quandary over the date of Mary's wedding. No one in the family wanted to hold a large and joyous celebration while still in mourning. Nor was it fair to Mary and Will to postpone their wedding plans. If Mary hoped for a big wedding,

she had to sacrifice that hope; she and Will were married in a private ceremony at the Richardsons' home at 7:30 in the morning on June 18, 1903.[99]

Nannie would miss Mary's presence and her help around the house. She often noted in her diary that Mary had helped get the younger ones off to school or had taken over that chore entirely. Mary was also handy at sewing and dressmaking for the women of the family. Anna, who would soon be 19, was also helpful, but she was inclined to be temperamental and was not so quietly competent as Mary.

After Lizzie's death, John gave up the home that he and Lizzie had shared and returned to the comfort of his family at 1631 Foucher Street. There, he would not risk falling into depression, surrounded by the cheerful bustle of his younger brothers and his sister. By January 1904, John had become active in politics, perhaps as a further defense against melancholy. On January 19, 1904, Nannie wrote to her sister, Jennie, that John "had to get up at 4 o'clock in order to be at the poll—he has something to do there—is much interested in politics—is a Jastremski man—Mr. Richardson is for Blanchard." I never saw such a mess of candidates. Every mail brings cards from a new man. On January 19, the Democratic Party of Louisiana held its primary election to choose candidates for State and Federal elections. The two Democratic contenders for Governor were Leon Jastremski and Newton Blanchard. Both men were strong supporters of Jim Crow segregation laws, but Jastremski was considered more extreme, having been one of the early members of the Knights of the White Camellia. John's reason for supporting Jastremski, however, had more to do with Jastremski's support for political reform at the local level and his opposition to State interference in local politics. Henry Sr. favored Blanchard because he had known him as Chairman of the Committee on Rivers and Harbors in the U.S. House of Representatives and Chairman of the Committee on Improvement of the Mississippi River in the U.S. Senate. Blanchard won the primary by a large margin, which led easily to his election as Governor in April. These primaries were of more practical importance than the final elections because the Democratic Party dominated nearly all politics in Louisiana.[100]

> At that time the governor of the state was in a position to exercise almost dictatorial powers in regard to the city nominations.… In fact, it was usually the case that the city ticket was made up to fit

> the wishes of the person who occupied the gubernatorial chair. The campaign of 1904 is one of the most important in the recent history of New Orleans, because this power of the governor was to be made unexpectedly the main issue.[101]

Governor Blanchard soon interfered in New Orleans local politics by obliging the local Regular Democrats to choose his favorite, Porter Parker, as their candidate for New Orleans City Attorney in the November elections. This produced a backlash among local reform Democrats, who organized a Home Rule ticket in opposition to the Regulars. The Home Rulers chose Charles F. Buck as their candidate for Mayor, R.H. Marr for District Attorney, and John F. Richardson for City Engineer.[102]

> John is in the midst of a political campaign. Of course you know he is running for City Engineer against Will Hardee. I don't know what the Home Rule chances are. John is much interested now, though he was very doubtful about running at first. I hope he will be elected. It will mean a great deal to him. He has had so many disappointments in his life. The Regulars can't say anything against him except to call him "Baby Richardson" and to speak of him as "that boy." I want somebody to put a card in the baby telling his age. He is in his twenty-ninth year, and that isn't young. I think the better class of people here (or the majority of them) are Home Rulers, but the Ring will make a hard fight. Some people think there will be a real fight over the election, but they always think that. I have heard that Will Hardee was very ill, with some fatal complaint of the liver?[103]

The Regulars won the election by a fairly wide margin, and their candidate, Martin Behrman, held the mayoralty for the next 16 years. There were frequent and probably justified complaints of fraud and corruption against the Regulars, but the main reasons for the Home Rulers' loss were the relatively short time they had to prepare their campaign and the failure of many of their supporters to pay their poll tax, leaving them ineligible to vote.[104]

Many years later, John still claimed that the Regulars had stuffed the ballot box against them and maintained that meaningful political reform in New Orleans was impossible at that time. He may also have been

discouraged by the relative inactivity in his job at the Sewerage and Water Board. Due to a lack of funds, the expansion of the water system, where John was First Assistant Engineer, did not get underway until 1905. This delay was much regretted following the yellow fever epidemic of 1905. In any case, John left New Orleans after May 18, 1905, when he applied for a passport. Soon afterward, he left for the West Coast, where he began a new job planning the construction of a new railroad.[105]

While John was living at the family home on Foucher Street, he may have taken a special interest in his brother Henry, who seemed to be just hanging around the house, doing little to advance his career. Nannie had written in her diary, "I don't know what I shall do with Henry—he is a dear good boy—but not strong and very lazy." Not much was expected of him, so he did not do very much. As sometimes happens with twins, Roger took up more space in the womb, leaving Henry smaller and weaker at birth and for most of his childhood. He also lacked self-confidence; "His hesitating speech is very much against him in school." The result was that while he was growing up, Nannie tended to group him with his younger brothers, and he was probably at least a year behind Roger in school.[106]

Henry's granddaughter remembers him as a kind and sensitive man who was close to nature and fond of animals. Even as he reached adulthood, he remained susceptible to the plight of stray cats: "Henry brought home two more cats to this cat-ridden family. He picked the poor little wretches out of the gutter." Henry told his granddaughter that he had wanted to be a doctor, but the Dean at Tulane declined to admit him to a pre-medical course, saying, "You come from a family of engineers; you shall be one." According to Henry's obituary, he attended Tulane University. If so, he did not stay very long because his name does not appear in the Jambalaya (the Tulane yearbook) between 1897 and 1907. Instead, Henry learned engineering on the job, as his father did.[107]

Since he was nearly 21 years old in 1903, it was about time he got started, and John was home again and ready to help. When he set his mind to it, John was very good at encouraging and training young people and could easily have launched his brother on a program of home study. More importantly, John probably helped Henry get his first job in engineering as a rodman with the Sewerage and Water Board, where John was First Assistant Engineer. As his career progress would show, Henry was simply a late starter. Once he began working, he

moved up the career ladder just as fast as his twin brother did. By 1907, Henry was an Inspector at the Sewerage and Water Board, and the following year, an Assistant Engineer.[108]

Even a bout with yellow fever in 1905 did not set Henry back very long. Nannie was not in New Orleans during the epidemic, and Roger wrote to assure her that all was well before Henry became ill:

> I am looking after Henry and Kempe, and have Mrs. Pettit [his mother-in-law] looking after me, so don't feel uneasy about any of us. Josie and Daughter [Corinne] are both fine. I know you have no idea how well daughter can talk.… She talks about her Grandpa a good deal.[109]

Nevertheless, Henry did contract yellow fever at the peak of the epidemic in mid-August. In his next letter, Roger assured Nannie that Henry was recovering.[110]

In that same letter, Roger went on to tell Nannie that her oldest son had become a hero in the fight against the epidemic:

> I have seen Farrar twice but for not more than a minute each time. He is busy as the dickens. Don't write to him any more at the house, but address him to the St Charles Hotel.… I am going to see Farrar this evening if I can find him. He hardly has time to eat. I suppose you heard about Perkins getting his leg broken. He was Farrar's assistant, and he and Farrar were out together in their automobile. A car ran into them and broke Perkin's leg, but Farrar never got a scratch. Farrar has aquired (sic) a good deal of fame here. The newspapers are full of the good he is doing.[111]

After his tour of duty at Reedy Island, Farrar was transferred to Laredo, Texas, where he worked as a specialist, fighting yellow fever and other diseases prevalent along the Mexican border. At that time, the area seemed relatively free of disease, and Corinne and Eunice were with him. Henry Sr. stopped to visit them for two days on his way back from his mission in California. Toward the end of 1904, Farrar was ordered to take command of the new Marine Hospital scheduled to open in Savannah, Georgia, in 1905.[112]

When the yellow fever epidemic broke out in New Orleans in 1905, Thomas Farrar Richardson was detailed to the New Orleans Health

Department. Farrar was an ideal choice to lead the fight against the epidemic. He was thoroughly familiar with the city and its medical facilities and was immune to yellow fever due to his own bout with the disease in Cuba. Since the Walter Reed Commission had established that the mosquito was the sole vector of infection for yellow fever, the fight against the epidemic in New Orleans was much more effective than earlier efforts. Total deaths from yellow fever during 1905 were held to 437, which, although more than the mini-epidemic of 1897, was a considerable reduction from the 4046 suffered in 1878.[113]

According to City Health Director Quitman Kohnke, "Never before was so large a battle successfully fought against yellow fever as in New Orleans in 1905, and never before was so marked a victory won in the face of such dire predictions of defeat."[114]

But even then, as Kohnke insisted, the death toll was considerably higher than it should have been due to

> the utter disregard of the expert advice of its constituted sanitary authorities by the legislative branch of government during the preceding several years. Had the advice, warningly given, and persistently and insistently urged, been heeded, there would not have occurred the disaster of 1905;—it would have been impossible to inflict upon New Orleans an infection of yellow fever of any considerable extent.[115]

Because the Sewerage and Water Board was short of funds, the renovation of New Orleans' water system had been delayed until the yellow fever epidemic proved just how urgent it was. In the summer of 1905, many New Orleans residents were still collecting water in open cisterns and water barrels, which were ideal breeding places for mosquitoes that carried yellow fever. Teams of citizens under the direction of Kohnke and Richardson were thus obliged to mount a last-ditch defense by spraying the interiors of buildings with sulfur to kill the mosquitoes, spraying cisterns and other still water with oil to kill the larvae, and covering cisterns with cheesecloth to prevent reinfestation. This was the first large-scale demonstration of these tactics to combat yellow fever. Since the general population was not yet familiar with the recent evidence of mosquito-borne disease transmission, Kohnke, Richardson, and their teams had to fight both popular resistance and mosquitoes.[116]

> From the July morning, three days after fever was announced, until after President Roosevelt's visit to New Orleans, Dr. Richardson never had one day off duty, never spent one moment of the twenty-four hours that he was not ready for the call. He went to work before the city was well awake, toured the city in his automobile, visiting every ward headquarters in the infected district, plunged into noisome Italian rookeries, walked through the fetid mazes behind the Poydras Market, straightened out tangles in wards and districts, helped systematize detail in the general headquarters, never stopping for midsummer sun or midsummer rain.[117]

After the epidemic subsided, Farrar returned briefly to Texas but soon went back to his post at the brand-new Marine Hospital in Savannah, Georgia. Shortly after his return, he received an offer to take charge of the Honduran government's campaign to wipe out yellow fever and similar diseases. He accepted the offer, took a leave of absence from the Public Health and Marine Hospital Service, and returned to New Orleans in January 1906 to prepare for the voyage to Honduras. At some point in his recent travels, Farrar had been exposed to typhoid fever and had contracted the disease. The first symptoms appeared in New Orleans, and soon afterward, he began his struggle against the disease and its complications that led to pneumonia and death on March 19, 1906.[118]

At that time, obituaries were full of flowery generalities, but it seems there was relatively little exaggeration in this excerpt:

> Energy, enthusiasm for his work, executive ability of a rare order, professional skill of a high degree—all added to a personality particularly winning and convincing—were the qualities that made Dr. Richardson esteemed wherever he went. He died with a record second to that of none of his associates in the Marine Hospital Service, and with a life full of promise of further usefulness. His brother officers loved him; his associates in medical work had for him more than common respect; his subordinates were spurred and enthused by his example; his superiors depended on him as a lieutenant who never was missing from the post of most obvious exertion, who ever sought the hardest fighting, who never evaded the most irksome responsibility.[119]

Nannie never mentioned deaths in her diaries. Farrar's family knew that his work required regular exposure to deadly diseases, yet the pain of their loss must have been nearly unbearable. Only a month later, however, Nannie seemed reconciled to Farrar's death when she received the visit of his good friend and his cousin, the newly married Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Goldberger: Mary Farrar and Joseph Goldberger were married on April 19, 1906, in New Orleans.[120]

> They came over from Gulfport last Tuesday night, and came up to breakfast with us next morning, as happy as possible, and at noon on that day sailed on the Comus for New York. I didn't go to the steamer to see them off, but Mr. Richardson did. I shall miss dear Mary so much. She has always been so sweet and dear to me, coming to see me so often.[121]

Mary Farrar had long been Nannie's favorite niece. In 1897, she wrote, "Mary Farrar spent the evening with us, too. Dear child—she is a perfect sunbeam—always happy herself, and always trying to add to the happiness of other people."[122]

An Empty Nest

As 1904 unfolded, Henry and Nannie were able to profit from a few of the privileges that come with advancing age. In Henry's case, his new duties as a member of the Mississippi River Commission were less demanding than his work as Chief State Engineer and left him more time to spend with his family. Henry also had more time to pursue his outside interests. He became a member of the Louisiana Historical Society in 1905. He participated more actively in meetings of the Louisiana Engineering Society, where he presented a paper on "A Model City" in 1908. As for Nannie, the children still at home were old enough that they did not need their mother's daily guidance. John would soon leave to seek his fortune in the West, but Henry, at 21, was still "boarding" at home, and Roger and his bride lived with his parents at 1631 Foucher St. for several years after they married. At 18, Anna was more than willing to help around the house and was "a pretty good house keeper." Henry and Nannie could now plan to be away for a few days or even a few weeks without making special arrangements for the children.

After all, even Kempe, Fred, and Morgan were approaching maturity at 16, 14, and 13, respectively.[123]

Among the fringe benefits of Henry's new job were the spring and fall inspection cruises down the river on the Commission's steamboat, the *Mississippi*. These trips involved some work for Henry, but it was agreeable work interspersed with leisure. Spouses were invited to accompany the Commission Members, and Nannie was excited about their first cruise in November 1904. She and Henry would have time to see the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis before it ended on December 1. Her sister, Jennie, was already in St. Louis, and Nannie wrote, urging her to stay until she arrived, so they "could go around together." Nannie and Henry would have only three days for this largest-ever World's Fair, which probably enabled them to see only a fraction of the 1500 buildings, connected by 75 miles of pathways, on 1200 acres of land. As is usual with World's Fairs, most of the buildings were temporary, but St. Louis has since made good use of the site, which is now home to Washington University, a park, several museums, a zoo, and an aquarium. Nannie accompanied Henry on the week-long spring cruise in 1908 and probably on others, as well. Nannie continued to visit her sister and friends in Tensas Parish and was free to spend more time there than she had in the past.[124]

In October 1905, Nannie and Henry went to visit Mary and Will in Blacksburg, Virginia, where they spent some time with their new grandson, Henry Richardson Rasche, born on August 11, 1904. Henry and Nannie were among the first to meet Mary and Will's second child, Farrar Richardson Rasche, who was born in New Orleans on January 12, 1907.[125]

They did not go to Oregon for John's second marriage; that was just too far away. In 1905, John had gone to the West Coast to work with a consortium based in San Francisco, in which a certain Colonel Draper was the prime mover. The group was planning to build a railroad and had sent John to Grants Pass, Oregon, suggesting that the planned route would run northward from San Francisco. After the earthquake of 1906, the group abandoned their project, leaving John without immediate prospects for employment. Meanwhile, John had made a number of friends in Grants Pass and was able to find enough work to earn a living as a consulting engineer and surveyor.[126]

Among John's new acquaintances was Mr. Homer White, who had recently come to Oregon from Wisconsin with his family. John soon

began to court Mabel, the loveliest of Mr. White's three lovely daughters. Mabel accepted John's proposal in July, but her mother initially thought Mabel was too young to marry at 19. John exerted all his charm and persuasive powers, and he and Mabel Lucy White were married on October 3, 1906. Mabel had been a well-protected young lady; she later confessed to her grandchildren that she still called her husband "Mr. Richardson" on the day they were married. John apparently took Mabel on a honeymoon trip to Louisiana, where he introduced her to his family. The only evidence of that visit is a plat of a survey he made for his Aunt Jennie in November 1906 concerning the boundary between her Myrtle Grove Plantation and the Bombay Plantation north of Waterproof.[127]

On August 12, 1907, their first son was born in Grants Pass and named Edgar Farrar, in honor of John's uncle Ned, and on August 18, 1908, their second son, John Francis Jr., was born in Portland, Oregon.[128]

Nannie and Henry may never have seen John's boys, but other grandchildren were as near as they could be. Roger and Josie were living with them when their first children arrived. Corinne Farrar Richardson was born and added to the extended family on December 14, 1903. Nannie seemed happy with the arrangement; on April 29, 1906, she wrote to Jennie, "Corinne [Farrar's widow] brings Eunice up every Sunday to spend the day with us, and the dear little girl has such a happy time. She and little Corinne are very fond of each other. Did I tell you how much Roger's baby was like Field?" "Roger's baby" was Roger Wolcott Richardson Jr., born October 27, 1905. And there were more grandchildren to come. Roger and Josie's third child, Margaret Jeanne, was born on February 27, 1908. By then, Roger and Josie had moved to their own lodgings at 4130 Constance Street.[129]

Chance encounters would bring back pleasant memories and renewed contacts. During the United Confederate Veterans' Convention of 1906 in New Orleans, "Mr. Richardson met an old friend and comrade, Dr. Todd, who married one of the Burwells whom Mr. Richardson used to know in Virginia. He came here to call, and I thought him very interesting." (See Chapter 7.) And so, the golden years of retirement rolled by all too quickly.[130]

Anna was the next to leave the nest when she married Louis Albert Dodge on April 3, 1908. The newspaper announcement was only five lines long and would probably have been even shorter if the groom had not been a reporter for the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*. Did Anna

choose to elope because of parental opposition to the marriage? Or did she simply wish to spare her aging parents the expense and effort of organizing a big wedding? No letters or diary entries are available to answer these questions, but Louis was 15 years older than Anna, and Henry and Nannie may have considered the profession of newspaper reporter to be less than reputable. At the time of her marriage, Anna was 22; she was born on December 30, 1885, had received a basic education at Miss Finney's School, and did not seem to have had any life plans other than marriage.[131]

During her early adolescence, Anna developed a nervous and irritable disposition. Nannie wrote, "I wish poor little [Anna] would get trained up to keep her temper. There is great unhappiness for her and discomfort for everyone about her, in store, if she continues to give way to temper as she does now." Her younger brothers teased her unmercifully and often provoked temper tantrums. Kempe was the teaser-in-chief. "Kempe is such a good boy too—always—except when he teazes (sic)—and he dearly loves to tease." Nannie probably lectured Anna more than she scolded her brother; Kempe was "…full of teasing ways, but so good in spite of his teasing that I hate to scold him." But it was Anna who had to adapt: "If Anna didn't get so easily teased, they wouldn't find it so much fun to tease her."[132]

Anna's problems continued during the summer of 1897. After a visit with her cousins at Ned and Lucy Farrar's,

> Anna came home from Lucy's before breakfast this morning—she had "got mad" with something one of the children had said to her. She seems to think it is her peculiar privilege to say what she pleases and to do as she pleases—when other children think they too have some rights of the same sort she gets offended.[133]

Apparently, all was soon forgiven:

> Anna came home, but went back to her Aunt Lucy's—the children wanted her, and telephoned that their Mother wanted her to go back, so I let her go. Poor child! It is a delightful thing for her to be away from the boys—and I love her to be with Lucy's little girls—she is lonely at home.[134]

Perhaps Nannie worried too much about Anna, who was not even 12 at that time. In Anna's defense, some of Nannie's diary notes suggest that she was especially sensitive to the needs of others, as well as her own. For example, she was the only one of the children who went to see "her dear Mammy," a former Black servant, who was now too old to work, and who apparently lived nearby. When her sister, Mary, was ill on January 9, 1897, Nannie found Anna to be "a good, thoughtful little nurse." Years later, it was Anna who urged her mother to travel, assuring her that she didn't mind doing the housekeeping.[135]

Nannie's lectures must have helped because there are few, if any, notes about teasing and temper tantrums in later years. At that time, Farrar, the idolized oldest brother, began to take a special interest in Kempe, and Nannie noticed the results: "It's a very great relief to me, Farrar taking Kempe under his wing—he is always up and dressed neatly in time for school now, and I have not a bit of trouble about it."[136]

During the next few years, there was not much news about Anna. In June 1900, she spent some time with Jennie and Gus at Myrtle Grove, and Nannie became concerned that Jennie was allowing her to take unchaperoned carriage rides with young men from neighboring plantations. In 1904, she went to Laredo to spend August with Corinne and Farrar. She was well chaperoned that time because she traveled there and back with Mrs. Toledano and her two younger daughters, who even took her on a side trip to Mexico City and Monterey. In 1905, she spent a long summer in the East, first with Corinne and Farrar in Savannah and then with Mary and Will in Blacksburg. Earlier that year, the *Times-Democrat* filled a column by noting Anna's presence at a euchre party given by Anna's friend Cynthia Littlejohn. Among the other guests were Henry and Kempe Richardson and Corinne's sister Stella Toledano. Nannie and Mrs. Littlejohn (also named Cynthia) chaperoned the party.[137]

For the next three years, there is no further news of Anna. Finally, in April 1908, she traded her life of chaperoned outings and housekeeping for marriage with a man who seemed entirely different from the men of her family. Despite their obvious differences, the Dodges did their best to make their marriage work. If Nannie and Henry were unhappy with this unusual marriage, surely any differences were set aside with the birth of Anna and Louis's first daughter, Elizabeth Charless Richardson Dodge, on June 10, 1909. In any case, her grandfather would have been

pleased to meet this most recent granddaughter, if he had the opportunity; Elizabeth was born only two months before he died.[138]

Meanwhile, on December 2, 1908, Henry Thurston Richardson and Aimée Eugenie Richard were married in a quiet ceremony at the home of her father, Mr. Oscar Valery Richard. Henry Sr. would not have wanted to miss that wedding, and he was probably well enough to attend. By then, however, it had become clear to his family and friends that Major Henry Brown Richardson's steadfastly robust health was failing him. He soldiered on until the summer of 1909, never missing one of the Mississippi River Commission's semi-annual inspection cruises, even in the spring of 1909 when he was perceptibly frail. On August 21, 1909, a few days before his 72nd birthday, "He died surrounded by his family and in full possession of his intellectual faculties to the last." It was Henry Jr. who was the most faithful in keeping his father company during his last days.[139]

The obituaries were dithyrambic as usual for public figures at that time; some of the more sober passages are quoted here:

> Major Richardson as a soldier leaves behind him a brilliant record, as an engineer a reputation for genius, ability and a knowledge of his profession not surpassed in this State, nor in the entire country perhaps. As a man he possessed the nobility of kindness, the refinement of intellect and the modesty of breeding. Had he been a man of less reserve and more inclined to delight in the plaudits of the multitude he would have achieved greater distinction, but as it was he shrunk from ephemeral public praise, asked no favors, and all the honors and distinctions that came gravitated to him as an inevitable result of ability and worthiness.
>
> Major Richardson was, particularly in the later years of his life, a river engineer, and probably no man in the country possessed a greater knowledge of levees and conditions of streams; none knew more of the peculiarities and [illegible] of the Mississippi than he did.…
>
> Through all the changes of factional politics in this State not a breath of slander ever touched him, although he held an office under the appointment of the Governor, and which carried with it a large amount of influence and patronage. While he was at the head of the State Board of Engineers it was never suggested that he might be removed, no matter what faction was in power.[140]

> The funeral was held the following day at the family residence, where the numerous bouquets and floral designs sent by his many friends as last tokens of the respect and love in which Major Richardson was regarded, almost hid the casket from view.
>
> …In the hallway and far out into the street a long line of citizens and members of veteran bodies stood with bared heads….
>
> Just as the funeral procession was entering Metairie Cemetery the notes of a trumpet sounding a funeral march rang out, and as the minister pronounced the last blessing taps were sounded….[141]

The body was interred in the Farrar tomb in the Army of Northern Virginia quarter of the cemetery. The active pallbearers were his fellow engineers from the State Board of Engineers, and his nephew Edgar Howard Farrar Jr. The honorary pallbearers were Senator and former Governor S.D. McEnery, Edgar H. Farrar, State Senator C.C. Cordill, and Major B.M. Harrod.[142]

Plans for the family members' futures had already been made. Ned Farrar was named executor of Henry's estate. Nannie would go to Blacksburg, Virginia, and live with Mary and Will. Morgan, who hoped to attend Virginia Tech, would accompany her. Nannie thought that if the family home was sold, it would bring just enough to pay the estate's debts, but she preferred to keep the house and try to rent it. Kempe and Fred were on their own and found jobs that enabled them to support themselves.[143]

James Kempe Richardson, born December 5, 1887, suffered a serious career setback after his father's death. At that time, he had just completed his junior year at Tulane, where he had an outstanding record. As a freshman, he intended to major in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering and was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon, the Junior German Club, and the Freshman football Team. In his sophomore year, he was elected Class President. He changed his major to Architectural Engineering and joined the Stanford White Club. He was also known as a "grind." He was again Class President in 1909 and had changed his major to Civil Engineering.[144]

Kempe had shaped up since his mischievous teasing days in 1897. His mother even found that he had become almost too serious, and especially too bookish. On June 26, 1899, she wrote, "I went down town with Kempe. I took him to get him away from his book." On August 12,

1902, Kempe offered $8.00 he had earned to his mother but finally spent it on a baseball glove and a ping-pong set. Nannie commented, "I am glad he spent it for some things which will take him away from his everlasting books." Despite Nannie's misgivings, Kempe's bookishness paid off for him during his university studies.[145]

After Henry died, Nannie did not receive enough income to support her three younger sons. Although some money was coming in, probably from her father's and her grandmother's estates, the amounts were small when divided among all the Farrar heirs. That meant that Kempe and Fred soon had to go to work, and Morgan might eventually have to do the same. Kempe could not register for his final year at Tulane in the autumn of 1909. He found work as a rodman with the Docks' Board, thus following the same path his father and brothers had taken toward a career in civil engineering. He apparently stayed in the family home on Foucher Street, where he was living with Fred in April 1910.[146]

Frederick Howard Farrar Richardson was born on September 12, 1889, in New Orleans. Although he was the second youngest child and had no particular life plan or higher education, he always seemed to land on his feet. As his parents noted, "The little monkey is never phased (sic)—he always has an answer." In his later life, he rarely complained and was known to be always good-natured. In 1909, he probably adapted to his new situation in the same spirit after mourning the loss of his father.[147]

After Nannie left for Blacksburg, Fred boarded briefly with family friends Cynthia and Angus Littlejohn at 1720 Peniston Street. Angus was Chief Stenographer at the local office of the New Orleans and North Eastern Rail Road and was able to find a job for Fred as a clerk in that office. Fred worked there for several years but did not stay long with the Littlejohns. In the spring of 1910, he was back in his family home on Foucher Street with Kempe, and later moved to the boarding house at 3219 Prytania.[148]

On February 7, 1910, Corinne, Farrar's young widow, married again. Her second husband was S. Brook Dickson, a local businessman with whom she might expect a more settled life. They had just returned from their honeymoon in Florida when Corinne and Farrar's daughter, Eunice, came down with pneumonia and died on March 12, 1910, at the age of six. Mary Rasche in Blacksburg probably learned of Eunice's death within a week or two, but if she knew that her mother was near

the end of her days, she may not have burdened her with this sad news.[149]

Anna Howard Farrar Richardson died in Blacksburg on April 13, 1910, at the age of 63. Nannie's family members were probably not surprised to learn of her death because her health had been failing even before Henry died.[150]

> Having had the advantage of a thorough education, both in college and from private tutors, combined with a natural intelligence, she possessed a comprehensive knowledge, being thoroughly conversant with all branches of literature. She also possessed a most optimistic and ideal view of life, and the natural beauty of her character drew about her many warm friends.[151]

Her body was returned to New Orleans, and funeral services were held on April 15 in her brother Ned's home on St. Charles Avenue. Presumably, her remains were interred in the Farrar crypt in Metairie Cemetery.

Kempe and Fred Richardson probably did not stay long on Foucher Street. If they had hoped to stay in their home, their Uncle Ned, who became the executor of Nannie's estate, must have convinced them that it was not practical for them to remain there and that the house had to be sold to settle their parents' estates. Their youngest brother, Morgan Harrod Richardson, then 19 years old, had apparently not decided where he would live. The census takers who gathered information in 1910 seem to have missed Morgan entirely, since his name does not appear in any of the households of his closest relatives.[152]

The family nest was finally empty. All but the youngest had established their own family nests, most of which were still centered on New Orleans. Although Henry and Nannie's sons would eventually scatter more widely around the country, their bonds of affection would remain strong as long as they lived.

Chapter 13
Solidarity and Separation

After Nannie left for Blacksburg, there was no one in New Orleans who could act as head of the Richardson family. Uncle Ned Farrar had a generous though impulsive nature and might have paid more attention to his nieces and nephews had he not been busy with his own large family and his many business and civic interests. Mary, the oldest Richardson, had developed a quiet solidity and growing authority that could have been useful to her younger brothers and sister, but she was far away. John, the oldest male, was even farther away, which was unfortunate because his political and social connections in the city would have been useful to his brothers. As it was, John was soon able to help Kempe and, later, Fred get started in their engineering careers, but for several years his limited earnings and obligations to his immediate family prevented him from providing much financial help. Roger and Henry benefited from their father's prestige, which opened doors for them and their brothers. While waiting for career opportunities to open up, Kempe and Fred remained in limbo, working in jobs without much future after their father's death. Roger seems to have assumed a sense of family responsibility, as shown by his "take charge" attitude during the yellow fever epidemic of 1905. He, too, was limited by his income, by his responsibility for his wife and three young children, and by the inevitable progression of his illness. By 1912, Roger and Henry were working out of town—too far away to provide close support.

Mary and Will

Mary Wolcott Richardson was born on October 26, 1873, in St. Joseph, Louisiana. (For information on Mary's early life, see Chapter 12.) After Thomas Farrar Richardson died, she was the eldest of Henry and Nannie's children.[1]

Despite Nannie's long illness, her final year with Mary and Will Rasche in Blacksburg must have been a relatively happy one. She was surely pleased to be close to two of her grandsons. Before Mary married, she had become her mother's faithful supporter and best friend and would not have accepted the idea of Nannie living anywhere else. Nannie and Morgan, however, could contribute little to the family budget for their support. Their presence may have caused some financial strain, although Will was earning a decent salary. He had been promoted from Assistant Professor to Adjunct Professor at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute (now Virginia Tech) shortly before their marriage and was destined for further advancement.[2]

Although impatient with and demanding toward his students, he remained deserving of their respect and received the affectionate nickname of "Bosco:"

> Bosco Rasche began his affiliation with Virginia Tech innocuously, enrolling as a student in 1893. But he joined the teaching staff two years later as an assistant in mechanical drawing and never obtained a degree, a fact that embarrassed college administrators. Even degreeless, he moved through the faculty ranks, eventually becoming head of the Department of Graphics and Mechanism.
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> Bosco knew his subject and attained an international reputation in the field of kinematics, or pure motion. He invented a new gear-testing device, wrote a book that was used by other institutions, including MIT, and became a consulting engineer on gear trains for General Motors.[3]

In his honor, the university conferred the name of Rasche Hall on a building that was originally built in 1894 and torn down in 2013 to make way for a new structure. It appears that Robert, Will's son by his first marriage, did not live with Will and Mary during his childhood. He was not shown in their household in the 1910 census, but was living with them in 1920, and probably in 1917, when he was attending VPI.[4]

Even faced with such a strong character as her husband's, Mary did not simply fade into the background. In addition to keeping house and raising her two sons, Mary eventually became known locally as an art teacher and a portrait painter. After Will died in 1951, his former students purchased a lot and built a house for Mary, who had made her own name known on campus.[5]

Mary's and Will were saddened by the death of their younger son, Farrar Richardson Rasche, in an auto accident in 1927 at the age of 20. Her older son, Henry Richardson Rasche, married but died before his mother in 1965, leaving no grandchildren to comfort her in her final years. She died on July 3, 1968, at 94.[6]

Morgan

Morgan Harrod Richardson was born on February 21, 1891, in New Orleans. He was Henry and Nannie's youngest child.[7]

At the time of Nannie's death, Morgan was probably the only son who did not have a job. He had gone to Blacksburg, Virginia with his mother, with the hope of entering the VPI. Whether for financial or scholastic reasons, he did not enroll there and returned to New Orleans after his mother's death. When he registered to vote in April 1912, he was a Civil Engineer, living in a boarding house on Prytania Street. Later that year, he was working as an engineer on road construction near Winnfield, Louisiana; Soard's *New Orleans Directory* for 1914 listed him as an Assistant Engineer with the Board of State Engineers, Highway Department, but did not show any residence for him in New Orleans. It seems likely that Roger, and perhaps Henry, used their influence to find him a position with the Highway Department, where he could learn his profession on the job.[8]

On December 16, 1912, Morgan and a young lady named Eunice Berry found themselves so impetuously in love that they convinced a judge in Monroe, Louisiana, to marry them at 11:45 in the evening, on the pretext that their train had arrived late. They spent a few months with his Aunt Jennie in 1914 and returned to "her home" in Winnsboro.[9]

By the time Morgan registered for the draft in 1917, he was working as a salesman for a local company in Winnsboro. He was still working there in 1920, and he and Eunice were living with her parents near Winnsboro. In 1924, however, he was employed as an engineer and inspector by the City of Baton Rouge, where he was living at the time. Morgan's life was cut short when he fell off the running board of a moving car and died in East Baton Rouge Parish on May 26, 1925, at the age of 34.[10]

Roger and Josie

Roger Wolcott Richardson was born on November 30, 1882, in New Orleans. He passed away on Christmas Day 1912 at the age of 30. (For information on Roger's early life, see Chapter 12.)[11]

Roger died in a sanitarium in the town of Hammond after a brief, final bout with pulmonary tuberculosis. This may have been a cruel surprise for most of his siblings, as Roger had apparently kept his affliction a secret. He was long believed to be the strongest of the boys, always healthy and athletic. His mother never mentioned this illness in her diary, and perhaps never knew of it. Since tuberculosis was known to be highly contagious, one can only suppose that he learned of his disease only after he had begun to raise a family, by which time, he had little choice but to try to lead a normal life for as long as he could.[12]

During his last years, Roger progressed normally in his work with the Board of State Engineers. In 1910, He was an Assistant Draftsman. By 1912, he had moved to the Board's Highway Department, where he was an Engineer Assistant. At that time, he was probably living and working in the town of Hammond, which was the center of Highway work in the New Orleans area and the site of the sanitarium where he died. The 1913 Soard's City Directory, however, showed his residence on the west side of New Orleans near his wife's family, which suggests that he may have rented a separate residence for his wife and the children as his illness advanced. Roger's funeral took place at the home of his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Pettit Sheffield, in New Orleans.[13]

Roger's death left his widow, Josie, and their three children in dire straits. Neither her family nor Roger's was able to provide much financial help. Apparently, Josie found it hard to believe that Roger's parents had left little or no inheritance for their children. After all, her father-in-law had held an important position in the State government, and Nannie's family, especially her brother Edgar Farrar, was believed to be quite wealthy. This led the Administrator of Roger's Succession, perhaps with Josie's encouragement, to sue Edgar Farrar in his role as Administrator of Nannie's Succession and Executor of Henry's Succession for the partition of their estates. Unfortunately for the Richardson children, there was little or nothing to share.[14]

But Roger's family did not let Josie down. In January 1914, Aunt Jennie Bass invited her to spend some time at Myrtle Grove Plantation, and her brother-in-law, Fred Richardson, escorted her and her three chil-

dren upriver to the Waterproof landing. Josie stayed at Myrtle Grove until the end of May, and while she was there, Fred arranged double dates with the most eligible bachelors of Tensas Parish. Fred loved to dance, and he, Josie, and their partners were seen at local or nearby dances nearly every fortnight. If there happened to be a lull in the social calendar, Aunt Jennie would throw her own party. Jennie may also have arranged for Josie to experience Natchez's social life. Josie crossed the river several times, once in the company of other young ladies from Tensas, and once to visit Mrs. Frank Kempe, the wife of Jennie's first cousin, once removed. The last of Josie's reported dancing partners, Joseph Trudeau Thompson, turned out to be the right one. Actually, Trudeau—or Trudo as they called him in Tensas—was not a local bachelor but lived across the river in Mississippi. He may have been in Tensas Parish working on a levee project, as his 1917 draft registration showed him to be a self-employed levee contractor.[15]

On May 1, 1914, the *Tensas Gazette* noted, "Mr. Trudo Thompson spent the weekend at Mrs. A.E. Bass." Evidently, Trudeau received Aunt Jennie's approval, as he and Josie married in New Orleans on August 22, 1914. Josie and Trudeau had two more daughters, Josephine and Hazel. The new head of Josie's family was energetic and ready to move, if necessary, to find work. During the 1920s, the family lived for a few years in Arkansas and then in Mississippi. By 1933, they were in Baton Rouge, where Trudeau was a foreman in the oil refinery. Thanks to their family support and their own merits, Roger Richardson Jr. and Margaret were able to attend Louisiana State University, and both pursued distinguished careers locally and nationally. Josie's determination and likely personal sacrifices had contributed to her children's success, but sadly, she died on June 24, 1933, just as they were setting out on their own careers.[16]

Henry

Henry Thurston Richardson was born on November 30, 1882, in New Orleans. (For information on Henry's early life, see Chapter 12.)[17]

After Roger's death, his twin, Henry, became the de facto head of the family in Louisiana. Unfortunately, his own financial situation was not yet very secure. In 1908, he had been an Assistant Engineer in the Sewerage and Water Board. The 1910 census shows that he was a civil engineer with the City of New Orleans, but that he had been out of work

for eight months. In April 1910, Henry and Aimée were boarding with Aimée's sister and brother-in-law, Myra and Edward Hill, on Elm Street in New Orleans. Soon, however, they had to make more stable arrangements in preparation for the arrival of their first daughter, Anna Howard (Nancy) Richardson, born on Christmas Day, 1910.[18]

New opportunities for employment appeared in 1910, when the Louisiana legislature created a Highway Department. By the end of 1911, Henry was employed as an Engineer Assistant with the Board of State Engineers, Highway Department, where Roger was also working. According to Soard's City Directory, their offices were at the New Courthouse Building in New Orleans. Henry was residing at 5232 Camp Street according to the 1913 City Directory. The next year, Henry was still an Engineer Assistant with the Highway Department, but the City Directory did not show his residential address. Henry and his family had probably moved to Hammond, Louisiana. According to Henry's granddaughter, they lived in Hammond for more than 20 years. Today, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development maintains one of its nine District Offices in Hammond, which apparently served as a regional base for its predecessor, the State Highway Department, as early as 1913.[19]

From time to time, Henry had to work on road construction projects that were too far from Hammond to allow a daily commute. For example, when he registered for the draft in 1918, he was working about 60 miles from Hammond, in or near Donaldsonville. During such assignments, Aimée and the children stayed in Hammond, and Henry probably saw them only on weekends.[20]

Henry rose steadily through the Highway Department hierarchy. By 1915, he was a Resident Engineer, that is, the chief engineer on the construction sites to which he was assigned, and by 1921, he was a District Manager. The following decade was a busy one for Henry. The election of reform-minded Governor John M. Parker in 1920 led to a new State Constitution, the creation of a State Highway Commission, and a concomitant increase in the State budget. Parker was a strong proponent of road construction, especially gravel roads in rural areas, and the legislature backed his road-building program. Substantial appropriations of State funds and Federal grants ensured that road construction and improvement would continue through the 1920s. During these busy years, Henry and Aimée's second daughter, Mary Virginia Richardson, was born on March 6, 1917.[21]

When Huey Long was elected Governor in 1928, the pace of highway construction quickened further as emphasis shifted to paved roads. The methods of the Long political machine, however, posed several problems for conscientious public servants such as Henry. Patronage had always been a feature of Louisiana politics, but Long extended the practice down to the lower levels of government so that even District Highway offices like the one Henry managed might be saddled with incapable employees who could not be fired.[22]

After Long consolidated his power as Governor, he began his campaign for the Senate in 1929, which meant that his political machine needed additional financing:

> Contributions from state employees … became standardized—first to help pay for Huey's campaign…, and later for other purposes, such as making sure the poll taxes of Long's poorest supporters were paid. The usual "deduct," beginning in August of 1930 for all workers above the manual-labor level, was 10 percent each month, except for the paychecks prior to Christmas and Easter.[23]

Not only were paychecks docked for political funds, but the Long organization also required 20% kickbacks from contractors on all highway construction contracts. At some point, Henry decided that he could not go along with such practices, and the result was that he was fired and blackballed from further State or local employment in Louisiana.[24]

Assuming that Henry lost his job in 1931, he and his family were nearly destitute for at least two more years. He finally found employment in Mississippi in the Civilian Conservation Corps program, which began in 1933 as one of the earliest emergency programs of the New Deal. The CCC was extremely successful in Mississippi, with an average enrollment of 55,000 men, mostly aged 18 to 25. The enrollees were provided with basic room and board and paid $30 per month, of which $25 were sent home to their families.[25]

> There were 105 CCC camps in Mississippi. The Army built and ran the camps. Camps usually consisted of 4 barracks, each housing 40-50 men. There was a mess hall, recreation building, officers quarters, a school for night classes and a latrine and bathhouse separate from the barracks. When the CCC troops formed

> for work in the morning, the Forest Service took over and directed the work.[26]

That's where Henry came in as a Project Superintendent. The U.S. Forest Service was the agency that provided work supervision and training in Mississippi. During the nine years the CCC teams worked in Mississippi, they created and built ten State Parks and five National Forests. Henry and his work crews must have been busy for years making boundary and topographical surveys and building roads and trails in the Parks and Forests. The ten State Parks, which were the first in Mississippi, are still open to the public today and are listed as National Historic Sites. Henry's work with the CCC meant longer separations from his family, but thanks to his inherent love of nature, he regarded his years in the beautiful forests of Mississippi as a positive experience.[27]

Under the separate but "equal" doctrine of that time, all CCC camps in Mississippi and the other southern states were racially segregated:

> Several all-black camps were located in South Carolina, Florida, and Mississippi. Small numbers of black enrollees were integrated into camps in other States where black recruits were too few in number to form separate camps. Proportionate to the total black population and its relatively poor socioeconomic status, the number of black camps in Region 8 [the South] was low. This was a CCC issue that demanded attention yet was never fully addressed.… Enforcement of the CCC segregation policy meant greater discrimination toward blacks, as few all-black camps were formed and access to white camps was usually forcefully denied.[28]

As the economy began to revive and the country prepared for a probable war, CCC activities were winding down. The Federal government then needed engineers like Henry to help prepare the nation's defenses. In 1940, he was again working in Louisiana, supervising airport construction near Baton Rouge. After the war began, he continued in that specialty and even went down to Brazil to help build an airstrip in the jungle. By 1944, he had found more stable employment as an engineer with the U.S. Public Health Service in Baton Rouge. During the war,

Aimée contributed to family finances by working as a clerk for the State Labor Department in Baton Rouge.[29]

After the war, Henry and Aimée returned to New Orleans, and Henry worked as an engineer with the nearby Jefferson Parish Drainage Board. They lived at 1513 Jackson Avenue, where Aimée opened a second-hand shop called Treasure Corner. He and Aimée spent their retirement years by the sea in Pass Christian, Mississippi, where he died on September 20, 1962, just short of his 80th birthday. Aimée followed him on December 16, 1972, at the age of 85.[30]

John

John Francis Richardson was born on March 21, 1876, in St. Joseph, Louisiana. (For information on John's early life, see Chapter 12.)[31]

In 1909, at the time of his father's death, John had not yet made his fortune in the West and could not yet help his younger brothers get started in their careers. John soon realized that near-term opportunities in the small town of Grants Pass were considerably less interesting for an engineer than in the growing city of Portland. He and his family moved there before August 18, 1908, when John Jr. was born. In 1909, he was working for the Reclamation Service as a Surveyman earning $200 per month.[32]

In April 1910, the family was still in Portland at the time of the U.S. Federal Census, where John stated that he was a civil engineer, but did not indicate that the Reclamation Service was his employer. Perhaps he was simply keeping his options open until he was sure of having an opportunity for advancement. About this time, the Reclamation Service must have offered John more interesting work on their Truckee-Carson reclamation project near Fallon, Nevada. In any case, his name was no longer in the 1911 edition of the Portland City Directory.[33]

The Reclamation Service, which later became the Bureau of Reclamation, was established by an act of Congress in 1902, and the Truckee-Carson Project, now known as the Newlands Project, was the first Federal reclamation project authorized under the new law. The original plan envisioned the reclamation of 300,000 acres of land in western Nevada through the construction of three dams, a 32-mile diversion canal, and up to ten reservoirs on the Truckee and Carson Rivers, as well as canals for water distribution. The first water was delivered to settlers on project lands in 1906, after construction of two dams, 67 miles of

diversion and distribution canals, and many more miles of lateral and drainage canals.[34]

The early settlers, however, soon ran into problems. Despite optimistic government projections, farmers found that 40-acre tracts were not large enough to enable them to earn a living under local conditions, especially since they often ran short of water during the growing season. Part of the problem was that property owners around Lake Tahoe had brought legal action against the government's plans to build a new dam and gain control of the lake's outlet waters. In any case, Reclamation Service engineers recommended constructing another dam and reservoir on the Carson River to address the shortfall in irrigation water during the dry season. In December 1910, the Secretary of the Interior approved the Lahontan Dam. Work on the new dam began early in 1911, which no doubt prompted John's move to Fallon. The dam was completed in 1915, thereby adding 310,000 acre-feet of storage potential to the project. The construction of distribution canals, laterals, and drains continued for several years. Meanwhile, a new Lake Tahoe outlet dam had been completed in 1913. This brought the total storage capacity for Lake Tahoe waters to 730,000 acre-feet.[35]

John's exact function at this stage of the project is not known, but the completion of the Lahontan Dam and Reservoir surely reduced the number of engineers needed on site, and John moved to a new position with the Reclamation Service in 1914. On July 5 of that year, he wrote to his Aunt Jennie at Myrtle Grove that he had sent Mabel and the boys to Grants Pass while he pursued a reconnaissance mission throughout the western states with headquarters in Yuma, Arizona. He had been "put in charge of investigations on the Green River" from its headwaters in Wyoming to the Grand Canyon. One of the sites that John examined during this mission was near Green River, Utah. Presumably, John's recommendations were favorable: 50 years after his visit, the Bureau of Reclamation finally completed the massive Flaming Gorge Dam at the site he had examined.[36]

In 1916, at the age of 40 and still open to adventure, John obtained a leave of absence from the Reclamation Service to spend a year working for the Braden copper mines in Chile. Mabel, Farrar, and John Jr. went with him, and all were well cared for by the company. On August 20, 1917, John and the family sailed for New York, via Panama. They were soon back in Fallon, Nevada, where John was named Project Manager for the Bureau of Reclamation.[37]

On February 22, 1918, John's beloved Aunt Jennie died. In her will, dated just two days before her death, Jennie left nearly all of her Myrtle Grove Plantation to John and a 250-acre tract of land to John's brother Henry. She also expressed the wish that John look out for the welfare of his two sisters, Mary and Anna. Although Jennie's last will was written with the help of a local Notary Public and signed by two witnesses, there were possible defects in the will under Louisiana law, which is very strict on testamentary questions. If Jennie were then considered intestate, her estate would have had to be divided among her two living brothers, her sister Nannie's eight living children, and possibly even Roger's three minor children. In any case, John had the help of his Uncle Ned's law firm, which handled the necessary court-administered probate. To ensure a clear title to the plantation, however, John had to obtain quitclaims from all other possible heirs, which must have required considerable tact, diplomacy, and possibly cash payments. All this surely meant that John had to spend several weeks in Louisiana getting all the paperwork together and negotiating the sale of the plantation.[38]

John was eager to convert his plantation heritage into liquid cash because he had another real estate investment in mind that he believed would be considerably more profitable. John's plan was to purchase and develop a cattle ranch on the outskirts of Fallon, Nevada. Surely, the irrigation project that he had worked on for several years had increased the potential productivity of the land around Fallon, and John would be in a position to profit personally from those investments in infrastructure.

John sold Myrtle Grove in 1920. The purchase price is believed to have been $42,000. He soon began buying property in and near Fallon, Nevada, including a house in town in 1920, and, by 1922, 80 acres located about one-half mile northwest of Fallon. John was still the local manager of the Newlands Project, which would be building drainage canals in the area until 1928. Nevertheless, John left the Reclamation Service to concentrate on developing his cattle ranch.[39]

Now that John was able to set down roots in Fallon, the time also seemed right for a larger family. Mabel and John's third son, James Kempe, was born on August 22, 1920, followed by their daughter, Lucy Jane, on September 3, 1921.[40]

As for the cattle ranch, the project advanced well for several years. Farrar and John Jr. helped with the chores during their high school years and enrolled at the University of Nevada in the fall of 1925. When John

Sr. was negotiating to obtain quitclaims from his siblings, he may have presented the Ranch project as a new sort of base where the extended family would be welcome, as Myrtle Grove Plantation had been in the past. And to a limited extent, the Ranch did fill that role. The first family member to receive an invitation to the Ranch was John's brother Fred, whom John persuaded to pursue a career in civil engineering. Although John was not able to employ Fred with the Reclamation Service, he did help Fred find work with the State of Nevada, where Fred gained his first practical experience as an engineer. Another family member who spent some time at the Ranch was John's niece, Corinne Farrar Richardson, Roger and Josie's older daughter, whom John's daughter remembered as her vibrant and colorful "Cousin Coty."[41]

But gradually, the family began to run short of funds; perhaps John had over-invested relative to the returns he could reasonably expect from his cattle, or perhaps the oncoming depression had reduced income from the Ranch. Never completely without resources, John found a job in Mexico with the J.G. White Engineering Company.[42]

> In January of 1926 the Mexican Congress approved a proposal for a law, generated by President Calles, that would establish a wide program of irrigation activities and institutions. The "Law of Irrigation with Federal Waters" (*Ley sobre irrigación con aguas federales*) created the National Irrigation Commission (*Comisión Nacional de Irrigación*, or CNI) and declared the construction of irrigation works to be of public interest.…
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> In the moment it began to plan its first works, the CNI made the decision to contract a prestigious construction firm, the J.G. White Engineering Company, founded in 1890. By 1920 this New York-based company had led a wide array of construction projects in 36 countries, and had opened an office in London to attend to its growing clientele. In an interview given to two engineers shortly before his death in 1945, former president Calles, who was undoubtedly the principal promoter of Mexico's irrigation program, revealed that it was he who decided to contract White Engineering. The reason was simple: at that time Mexican engineers didn't know how to do big irrigation projects…. Beginning in 1927 various U.S. engineers started working in Mexico on different aspects of the irrigation program.

> The Company had the foresight to hire the services of some of the best North American engineers who had been working in the Bureau of Reclamation. That's how they came to Mexico to work….[43]

John's work in Mexico started out well: On April 26, 1926, he wrote to the family from Mexico City:

> I believe I wrote to you that the Rio Monte Project in the State of Tamaulipas, which I had examined and reported on, had been approved by the National Irrigation Commission and that construction work on this would start immediately. I have been waiting here in Mexico City until a party of Mexican engineers can be organized to go to Rio Monte to make the necessary preliminary surveys. I expect to leave here on Wednesday night April 28th for Xicatencatl … and shall immediately establish a camp for at least twenty four men and this will be followed quite rapidly by a construction camp….[44]

Somehow, things did not work out as foreseen. On January 26, 1927, he wrote to his son Farrar from Rio Monte Camp, Xicatencatl, Tampico,

> I do not think things are going to hold together much longer down here. I am afraid that the Mexican Government is in such straights for money that this fact coupled with other difficulties may bring their irrigation policy to a sudden close. In that event you and John will have to stop school. The hand to mouth policy by which we have lived has brought us to ruin.[45]

Apparently, some of the projects approved by the technocrats of the Irrigation Commission had been canceled due to financial necessity and political convenience. No sooner had John reached Rio Monte than a near revolution broke out in West Central Mexico, provoked by President Calles's aggressive suppression of the Catholic Church. The Cristeros uprisings, as they were called, reached a peak toward the end of 1926. Although these uprisings did not affect the Tampico area directly, they were so disruptive elsewhere that substantial government efforts were necessary to restore order. The government then decided to reduce its irrigation budget and concentrate funding in the North on two tributaries

of the Rio Grande. This decision was probably taken to prepare for upcoming negotiations with the United States regarding the allocation of Rio Grande waters, on the expectation that final allocations would respect existing uses of Rio Grande irrigation waters. The Rio Monte project was indefinitely postponed, and John was without a job. This was just the beginning of a severe cutback in irrigation spending, and the Mexican government canceled its contract with the J.G. White Company in 1932.[46]

What made John's situation even more uncomfortable was that he had apparently lost his passport, and until he obtained a new one, he was a virtual prisoner in Mexico. John's situation was not entirely disagreeable. He had been befriended by a certain General Osuna and his family, who regularly offered him hospitality during his idle hours. This was probably General Gregorio Osuna Hinojosa, who had been commander of the rural armed forces in 1913 under President Madero. He subsequently joined the Constitutionalists and served as Governor of Tamaulipas in 1916 and Governor of Aguascalientes in 1917. His function in 1926 is uncertain, but he probably supported the Calles government.[47]

John was able to profit from his enforced leisure by improving his fluency in Spanish, which he had begun to learn during his stay in Chile. Years later, during World War II, he would surprise immigrant Mexican fruit pickers, whom almost everyone else avoided with suspicion, by greeting them warmly in Spanish and engaging them in conversations on the streets of Ukiah, California.[48]

During John's semi-captivity, he had time to write long letters home, expressing his concerns and giving advice about managing the Ranch, which was still bringing in insufficient income for the family. Meanwhile, back in Fallon, family debt was piling up, and Mabel was even more worried than John. He had apparently left Mabel with a broad power of attorney and permission to sell certain properties if necessary. Due to dire necessity, however, or perhaps due to some misunderstanding, Mabel sold the entire Ranch, sending all John's plans down the drain. Despite the loving bonds that held them together, John was never able to forgive Mabel entirely for that decision. Family members have tended to fault John's Ranch project as unreasonably visionary. However, as recently as January 2000, Fallon residents testified that the dairy farm that succeeded the Ranch was operating profitably.[49]

When John was finally back from Mexico, he found that the sale of the Ranch had at least brought in enough funds to support his family while he looked for work. Farrar and John had to drop out of the University of Nevada. Farrar, as the oldest, was expected to support himself and soon found a job with the California Division of Highways, where he worked for the rest of his life.[50]

John then sought employment with the Federal government. He first investigated the possibility of returning to the Newlands Reclamation Project as Manager. That did not pan out, probably because the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District had taken over the Project's operation and maintenance from the Bureau of Reclamation in January 1927. He then went to Huntington, West Virginia, where he hoped to obtain employment with the Mississippi River Commission. Mabel, Jane, Kempe, and John Jr. did not immediately accompany him but stayed with Mabel's family in Grants Pass. On April 29, 1929, he wrote to Mabel and the children that he had not yet received a response to his request for reinstatement in the Civil Service. This delay was frustrating because the MRC would not consider his application for employment before he was reinstated.[51]

If John's objective was employment with the MRC, it seems curious that he went to Huntington, because the Commission's headquarters were then located at St. Louis, Missouri, and would relocate to Vicksburg, Mississippi, by the end of 1929. In any case, the MRC was probably not hiring at that time. In compliance with orders from the Chief of Engineers, General Edgar Jadwin, the newly appointed MRC President, Colonel Thomas H. Jackson, had decided that the Mississippi River Commission "shall act only as a consulting and advisory body; its action being limited to consideration and recommendation." Under Jackson's administration, the MRC's operations were merged with the Corps of Engineers, and many of its employees were furloughed and rehired by the Corps.[52]

By 1930, John had secured an engineering job with Civil Service status and had brought Mabel and the three younger children to Huntington. By 1932, John was transferred to Louisville, Kentucky, where he worked until he retired in 1942. He never stated which government agency he was working for, but both Huntington and Louisville are sites of the Army Corps of Engineers regional headquarters. During this time, John Jr. and later Kempe and Jane grew to adulthood,

completed their education as best they could, married, and were eventually successful in their chosen careers.[53]

After retirement, John and Mabel moved to Ukiah, California, where their son Farrar and his family had settled temporarily. Kempe and Jane, with their families, joined them there after World War II, making Ukiah something of a rallying point for John's family. John and Mabel settled into the Ukiah community, where John died in 1947, followed by Mabel in 1962.[54]

Kempe

James Kempe Richardson was born on December 5, 1887, in New Orleans. (For information on Kempe's early life, see Chapter 12.)[55]

If anyone in the family had a right to feel that life was unfair, it was James Kempe Richardson. In his later years, Kempe still seemed chagrined and perhaps somewhat bitter that he had not been able to finish his studies at Tulane despite his excellent record there. Indeed, it was worse than ironic that the family had spent so much in a futile attempt to prepare Roger for a brilliant career that there was no money left to finance Kempe's final years of study. In the autumn of 1909, he was suddenly on his own. He was not satisfied, however, to work as a clerk, but soon began to acquire practical engineering experience as a rodman for the New Orleans Docks Board, where he was working in April 1910. Perhaps Henry, who was working in the City Engineer's office in 1909, had helped him find this job.[56]

In 1911, when Kempe heard about John's new position with the U.S. Reclamation Service, he may have asked John for help to get out of his dead-end job in New Orleans. Whether he or John took the initiative, John invited Kempe to join him in Fallon, Nevada. If Kempe had visions of making his fortune in the West, he may have been disappointed. When he arrived, John put him to work for the Reclamation Service on a job Kempe considered little better than manual labor. At that time, Fallon consisted of a church or two and a general store. Few boarding facilities were available, so the Bureau's working crew was living in a tent city. The Reclamation Service created an entire town of cabins and tents, called Lahontan City, to house and provide services for workers building the new dam and their families. While the dam was under construction, "Lahontan City would have held its own with any American town."[57]

Nevertheless, John must have promised Kempe some basic civil engineering experience and probably kept that promise. At the same time, Kempe was earning a salary and had saved enough to enroll at Stanford University in 1913. John met Kempe in San Francisco, and on July 5, 1914, wrote to his Aunt Jennie that Kempe had just finished his first year at Stanford, where he had earned a scholarship and an appointment as an instructor, which enabled him to cover his expenses and to get his degree. "Kempe is as fine a specimen of manhood, brains and ability as was ever in the family and I am looking forward to a brilliant career for him." Kempe received his AB degree in Civil Engineering from Stanford in January 1916.[58]

Meanwhile, Kempe's future wife, Mary Bolton Post, had enrolled at Stanford, where she was a member of the Alpha Phi Sorority in 1908. By 1910, she was studying Nursing at the Stanford Lane Hospital in San Francisco. After completing her training as a nurse, she returned to Palo Alto, where she lived with her mother and worked as a laboratory assistant, according to the 1914 Palo Alto City Directory. Around that time, she resumed her studies at Stanford and received an AB degree in English in 1916. Despite their different scholastic orientations, Kempe and Mary had qualities in common that led them to cultivate a more than casual acquaintance. They were both several years older than the average student and certainly more mature, having come through the school of hard knocks. Secondly, both worked at least part-time to pay tuition and living expenses.[59]

After graduating from Stanford, Kempe went to work as an engineer for Alcoa in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he registered for the draft on June 5, 1917. He was inducted on September 14, 1918, and served as a Private in the Ordinance Department in Aberdeen, Maryland. He received an honorable discharge on January 23, 1919. He was subsequently commissioned as an officer, presumably in the Army Reserve, since he served no active duty at that time.[60]

After the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, Mary joined the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps and served at the U.S. Navy Base Hospital in Scotland. If Mary and Kempe had made any marriage plans, the war obviously got in their way. After the war, Mary returned to live in Palo Alto.[61]

As 1919 began, Kempe had just turned 31, and his priorities were to find work and to get married. He was soon employed by an oil and gas company in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, but had to wait a few months more

to reach his second objective. During a conversation with his niece many years later, Kempe said that he had gone to California at least once in 1919, but he didn't say why he went there. Presumably, he saw Mary again and convinced her that they should set a date for their marriage. They agreed to meet at Kansas City, Missouri, a halfway point, where the Jackson County authorities delivered their marriage license on July 3, 1919, enabling them to marry on the Fourth of July.[62]

Mary and Kempe then set up housekeeping in Bartlesville, but disappeared from public records after the 1920 census. According to California Voter Registration Records, they were living in Laguna Beach, California, in 1932. (Kempe was a Democrat and Mary a Republican.) By the end of 1934, they had moved to Denver, Colorado. Kempe was again working for the Bureau of Reclamation, this time as an engineer in their Denver Office.[63]

In 1942, Kempe was 54 years old but claimed to be only 51 when he registered for the draft. He may have figured that subtracting a few years from his age would give him a better chance of returning to the army as a commissioned officer. In any case, that is the way things turned out. The army sent him to Officer Candidate School, commissioned him as a Major, and shipped him to Western Europe via the Normandy beachhead. As the war in Europe was drawing to an end, he served primarily in military government and was mustered out in 1945. After World War II, he returned to the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver, where he remained until retirement. He and Mary spent their final years in Laguna Hills, California. Mary died on October 28, 1985, and Kempe followed her on December 15, 1986, at the age of 99.[64]

Fred

Frederick Howard Farrar Richardson was born on September 12, 1889, in New Orleans. (For information on Fred's early life, see Chapter 12.)[65]

After Roger died in 1912, Fred was pretty much on his own in New Orleans. Henry and Kempe had both left, and his sister Anna was the only close kin remaining in town. In that year, he was still working as a clerk with the New Orleans and North Eastern Railroad, but in 1913, he was clerking with LeBlanc & Railey Ltd., steamship and insurance agents. After that, he no longer appeared in the City Directory, and in his 24th year, he began to profit from his freedom as a young bachelor.[66]

Following Nannie's death, Jennie Bass tried to keep in touch with her

nephews. She frequently invited Henry, Morgan, and their spouses for visits at Myrtle Grove. Fred stayed with her for several years, during which he must have helped her manage the plantation. In January 1914, Fred's Aunt Jennie invited Roger's widow, Josie, to spend some time with her at Myrtle Grove Plantation, and Fred escorted her upriver to Waterproof. During Josie's stay, Fred and Jennie arranged for her to meet several of Tensas Parish's most eligible bachelors. Fred loved to dance and was a very good dancer; he and Josie were seen with various partners at nearly all of the Parish's public balls and private parties during that busy social season. Fred and Jennie's match-making efforts soon led to a happy and lasting combination. Josie and Trudeau Thompson were married on July 22, 1914, in New Orleans. Fred's most frequent date at that time was Laura Bondurant, whose family had been good friends of Henry and Nannie. If Fred was actually courting Miss Bondurant, however, he was not as fortunate as Josie.[67]

Nevertheless, Fred stayed on at Myrtle Grove until 1917. After one year's residence, the local authorities considered him a regular citizen of the Parish and eligible for jury duty. A more agreeable testimony to his place in society came when he joined the Waterproof baseball team as a right-fielder and even helped them win a few games. No doubt, his Aunt Jennie was glad to have his help around the plantation, since she was well into her 70s by then.[68]

Fred must have gone down to New Orleans for Josie's wedding, and he probably found other reasons to make that pleasant trip while he was living in Waterproof. Many years later, Fred would reminisce about the good times he had playing the guitar aboard the old Mississippi riverboats, so perhaps he even had a regular job entertaining passengers during those prosperous pre-war years.

These happy times ended after Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. Congress declared war on April 6, and Fred went back to New Orleans to join the army. He had hoped to enlist in the historic Washington Artillery Battalion of the Louisiana National Guard that was headquartered there, but this small but prestigious unit had mushroomed to the size of a full regiment of about 800 men at the end of April and was probably refusing new enlistments by the time Fred arrived. He decided to enlist for Federal Service in the Cavalry of the Louisiana National Guard as a Saddler on August 5, 1917.[69]

At that time, the cavalry still benefited from the prestige it had earned in border operations against the Mexican bandit Pancho Villa. By

the time the United States sent troops to Europe, however, cavalry operations had proven ineffective in the trench warfare conditions on the Western Front. This led the U.S. Army to convert most of its cavalry units into field artillery regiments. A few cavalry regiments were sent to Europe, but if Fred had visions of military adventure, he was disappointed, as he did not serve overseas and probably spent most of his army service at Camp Beauregard, Louisiana.[70]

Meanwhile, Aunt Jennie Bass had died on February 22, 1918, and left her Myrtle Grove Plantation to her nephew John Francis Richardson. John, who was living in Fallon, Nevada, then returned to Louisiana in the spring of 1918 to settle the estate and to clear his title to the plantation. Jennie's choice of John as her principal heir had placed him face-to-face with a moral obligation to help his less fortunate brothers and sisters. In response to a letter from his Aunt Jennie, John had already written that he wanted to help Fred when he could. After Jennie's death, Kempe reminded John that Fred would need his help since he had few career prospects. During his time in Louisiana, John probably met Fred to obtain a quitclaim for his inheritance. At that time, he must have invited him to join him in Fallon.[71]

Fred probably arrived in Fallon soon after his discharge from the army on January 9, 1919. It is not clear, however, whether John was able to find a job for Fred with the Bureau of Reclamation. At that time, Fred was not qualified by education or experience for anything but clerical work, which offered little future. According to the U.S. Census of 1920, the U.S. Reclamation Service in Fallon employed about ten persons, in addition to laborers. There were engineers, watermasters, bookkeepers, and clerks. In such a small operation, it would have been difficult for John to justify employing an engineering trainee. Many years later, their brother Kempe accused John of firing Fred after he arrived in Fallon. But Fred, himself, expressed only positive feelings toward John. In later years, Fred said that he owed his start in engineering to John, who probably helped him find work learning engineering from the ground up with the Nevada State Highway Department. By January 1920, Fred was working as a rodman in Elko, Nevada, where he was living in a boarding house with two other members of a survey party.[72]

On September 15, 1923, Fred and Henrietta Louise Myer were married at Lovelock, Nevada, only three days after his 34th birthday and two days before her 28th. Henrietta was a student nurse working at a Nevada hotel during her school holiday. For at least three more years,

they remained in Nevada, where their two sons were born: Frederick Morgan Richardson in 1924 and Robert Major Richardson in 1925. Within the next year or two, Fred and his family moved to California, where Fred was employed by the California State Division of Highways (now known as Caltrans), first as a Surveyor and, by 1950, as a Civil Engineer.[73]

They lived in Richmond until 1927 and then moved southward to Encinitas, Los Angeles County, where their daughter, Mary Wolcott Richardson, was born in 1928. Two years later, they were as far south as one can go in California, in the tiny settlement of Jacumba. From 1933 to 1939, they lived in San Bernardino, and then in San Diego and its suburb, La Mesa. Fred retired from the Division of Highways in 1954, and he and Henrietta remained in La Mesa until Fred died in 1957 at age 68. Henrietta then lived for a time in Escondido and finally in a senior apartment in Solana Beach. She died at the age of 90 on Christmas Day 1985, after suffering a stroke while spending the Holidays with her family in Leucadia, Encinitas, California.[74]

Anna

Anna Girault Richardson was born on December 30, 1885, in New Orleans. (For information on Anna's early life, see Chapter 12.)[75]

Anna was the only one of Henry and Nannie's children who remained in New Orleans for the rest of her life. Unfortunately, she and her younger brothers were not close as they approached adulthood; she and her husband, Louis Dodge, might have been a source of advice and support, especially for Fred and Morgan.

As it was, Anna had her own problems, mainly centering around a fragile marriage, which eventually led to divorce. As Nannie's diary made clear, Anna had a "difficult" character and a sensitive disposition. In her early adolescence, she was inclined to be demanding of others and impatient with their supposed shortcomings. Over the years, her mother tried to counsel her and smooth her rough edges, but Anna was probably never able to assume the docile subordination expected of a wife at that time. Her husband, Louis Dodge, was 15 years older than she, and perhaps he showed more than ordinary patience with his young wife. That they were able to stay together as long as they did and bear three children suggests that they did not spare their efforts to keep the marriage together. Their first child was Elizabeth Charless

Richardson Dodge, born in 1909 and named after Anna's deceased sister-in-law. Next came Farrar Richardson Dodge in 1915; he studied engineering at Tulane. Cynthia Girault Dodge was born in 1922.

Nevertheless, Anna and Louis were divorced by 1930. Their son then lived with Louis, and their two daughters lived with Anna while they were growing up. After leaving the *Times-Democrat*, Louis was employed as Secretary of the Delgado Trade School in New Orleans. This may not have been a well-paying job, but Louis was apparently able to support Anna and their children. Anna died in New Orleans in 1944, aged 58, and Louis in Gulfport, Mississippi, in 1957.[76]

Epilogue

During my research for this book, I met and talked with paternal aunts, uncles, and cousins of varying degrees. They were all enthusiastic about the project and contributed many valuable memories that I have used in the preceding chapters. They also asked questions and offered opinions to which I attempt to respond in this final chapter.

The most frequent question was the one asked in the Preface: why did Henry Brown Richardson fight for the South, thereby renouncing the values and loyalties his forbears had held for more than two hundred years? The brief biographies of Henry's six known male ancestors show no tendencies toward rebellion or reckless adventure. All seemed faithful to their country, their religion, and their families' traditions. Henry's aberration can hardly be attributed to heredity or the examples set by his ancestors.

Pure chance—or Providence—was probably the most important factor in determining Henry's fate. In the spring of 1858, Henry had been accepted to take an examination as a naval engineer but was unable to raise the funds to pay his way to New York, where the examination was held. If Henry had been in the United States Navy in 1861, he would not have fought for the Confederacy.[1]

Some of Henry's grandchildren have told me that he fell in love with Miss Nannie Farrar in St. Joseph before the war, and that this romantic infatuation led him to transfer his loyalty to the Southern cause. This would have made a heart-warming story, but Henry's correspondence shows no sign of any romantic attachment at that time. When Henry left St. Joseph with the Tensas Rifles in 1861, Nannie was only 14 years old—perhaps old enough for a flirtation but hardly for courtship. A year later, during his convalescence in Virginia, Henry was not immune to the attractions of other young ladies and behaved like a typical bachelor with no prior commitment.

Although Henry did not fall in love with any Louisiana belle before the war, he soon developed a romantic attachment to the South. The social life he discovered in a small southern town contrasted brilliantly with that of New England villages, where many still considered dancing sinful. The virtues of honor and fidelity that his white middle-class contacts espoused coincided with Henry's own values. In this respect, Southern morality was a welcome contrast to the moral climate he found in Milwaukee, where even longtime residents questioned the honesty of the citizenry.[2]

Equally important was the economic opportunity that he found in Louisiana. Tensas Parish was at the center of a boom in cotton production that showed no signs of abating. A rush to put virgin lands into production led to a sustained demand for surveyors that kept Henry and his partner constantly occupied. By the time the war broke out, Henry had reached a level of prosperity he had never enjoyed before—a welcome contrast to his dismal experience in the West. Indeed, the recession of 1857 hardly affected the South, which led Southerners to vaunt the supposed superiority of their economic system. Henry Richardson likely shared that opinion.

Evidently, the question of slavery was not an obstacle to Henry's embracing the Southern cause. He was not an abolitionist, but he believed in letting each State decide the question of slavery for itself, as did the Douglas Democrats. Neither did he believe in the inherent equality of all men, as his grandfather Thurston did. On March 31, when telling his parents about the many foreign inhabitants of Milwaukee, he wrote, "Happily there are very few Irishmen, but mostly Germans who are by far a better people." Henry's youthful prejudices would today be characterized as cultural racism, a set of attitudes that still raises problems in societies throughout the world.[3]

In any event, Henry had rapidly assimilated Southern political and cultural points of view and had begun to think of himself as a Southerner. Writing to his parents from Johnson's Island Prisoner of War Camp, Henry justified his enlistment in the Confederate Army by explaining that he had become a citizen of Louisiana, where he intended to live for the foreseeable future; therefore, his allegiance to the Confederacy took precedence over his previous allegiance to the United States. Tensas Parish also welcomed Henry into its community, as evidenced by his unanimous election to the Tensas Cavalry, which

included members from the most prominent planter families in the parish.[4]

Henry's life story shows that he was a very moral person, as were his father and grandfather. The difference was that Henry had developed a secular morality, whereas his ancestors' morality was firmly grounded in religious conviction. This is evident from the considerations that led Henry to change his allegiance. Henry was not the only member of his generation to be caught up in this secular trend. One of his neighbors in Goshen, New Hampshire, was known to be an "unbeliever," which would probably have been unthinkable 50 years earlier. Indeed, the secular trend seemed to be trending faster after the Second Great Awakening, which had led Henry's father to the pulpit.[5]

The movements for social and civic reform engendered by the Second Great Awakening reinforced the belief that, with God's help, human beings could build a more nearly perfect world here on earth. But then, the resurgence of Perfectionism, as advocated by Charles Grandison Finney and William Lloyd Garrison, ultimately led many to place greater importance on human efforts toward that goal than on God's help. Paradoxically, a movement that began as an awakening of Christian commitment actually contributed to the growing secular trend. Philosopher Charles Taylor provides a more complete exposition of that process in his *A Secular Age*.[6]

Henry's secular orientation, of course, does not necessarily imply that his conception of good and evil was any less rigorous than that of his Puritan ancestors. Nevertheless, Henry's grandfather, the Reverend David Thurston, believed that secular morality opened the way to evils that were already too prevalent in the world. In his 1849 sermon before the annual meeting of the American Missionary Society, he listed the evils of human society that he believed must be cut out by the root through the application of biblical truths:

- The inordinate love of the world through the idolatry of wealth.
- Superficial, incorrect views of truth and duty, including atheism, pantheism, and transcendentalism.
- Expediency, which "makes right and wrong to depend on circumstances."
- Oppression—"Of all the countless ways in which men oppress each other, the most nefarious is that of slaveholding."[7]

Henry Brown Richardson was raised in a Christian household that probably differed little from his grandfather's. As he grew older, however, he was also influenced—and perhaps liberated—by the increasingly secular morality of his surroundings. He continued to believe in a Supreme Being, or at least in an all-embracing phenomenon called Providence. Despite his rebellious streak and a tendency to question received wisdom, he adhered to most of his parents' moral code, though he may have rejected some of its biblical foundations. Still, the absence of certain fixed reference points in Henry's evolving moral code surely made it possible for him to accept a Southern secular morality that upheld the oppression inherent in slavery.

This raises another question that has troubled Henry's descendants: Given Henry's continued devotion to the Confederacy's Lost Cause, to what extent did he participate in the oppression of Louisiana's Freedmen and women after the war?

Henry's sarcastic references to Blacks as "a little lower than the angels" suggested that, in 1868, he shared the animus of other Southern whites toward their former slaves. No other negative comments about the Freedmen have been found in his correspondence. Nevertheless, Henry's alliance with the Farrars, sealed by his marriage to Anna Howard (Nannie) Farrar, must have influenced his thinking. The Farrars are recognized as one of the First Families of Virginia. Their ancestor, William Farrar, arrived in the Virginia Colony in 1619, the year the first slaves appeared in the colony. Nannie's father, Thomas Prince Farrar, raised an infantry company in 1861 but was obliged to resign his captain's commission due to inflammatory rheumatism of the knee. Following the war, Farrar was probably the foremost lawyer in Tensas Parish and was so busy that he had little time for politics. By 1877, however, he had become active in the Conservative Democratic Party and remained so until shortly before his death in 1880. As a state employee, Henry Richardson tried to avoid engagement in partisan politics. Still, the years from 1872 to 1880, during which Henry and Nannie lived mostly with her father, offered many opportunities for Thomas Prince Farrar to influence Henry's opinions. There is no evidence that Henry Richardson or his father-in-law participated in the suppression of Black voters during the 1878 election campaign, but both supported Charles C. Cordill, who spearheaded the Democratic takeover of the Tensas parish government by force and fraud.[8]

If Thomas Prince Farrar favored ending Black participation in Tensas Parish government, his son, Edgar Howard Farrar, carried that policy to its state-wide extreme. As historian Justin A. Nystrom has pointed out, it was the younger generation of civic leaders "who drove the movement to crush Reconstruction's legacy…." The civic leaders of the older generation, most of whom fought in the war, had been chastened by its terrible cost and defeat. The younger generation, however, "had been raised in the powerful gospel of the Lost Cause and did not harbor the same kinds of self-doubt about their own political and social vision."[9]

Edgar Howard Farrar was also a very moral person who believed in a Supreme Being. Typical of Southern reformers of the early 1900s, he seemed to believe that human beings could reform society without God's help—or at least without applying Christian doctrines such as those preached by the Reverend David Thurston. Despite his well-earned reputation as a reformer of city and state government, he seemed incapable of applying basic principles of democracy with justice and consistency. During the reformers' campaign against the Louisiana Lottery in 1890, he declared, “If you attempt to run a democracy and an oligarchy together, the oligarchy will swallow up the democracy." Only six years later, however, he was the most outspoken supporter of laws that would disfranchise Louisiana's poor, illiterate Blacks and whites, thereby establishing an oligarchy of privileged white men that would rule the state well into the next century.

One can hardly deny that Southern-inspired reforms during Woodrow Wilson's presidency benefited the national economy and all Americans to the extent that they were engaged in that economy. Nevertheless, the Southern oligarchs who supported those reforms claimed, with little evidence, that Blacks and poor whites were incapable of understanding reform legislation and, therefore, must be denied the right to vote. Of course, Southerners were not the only politicians who favored similar restrictions on voting rights during that era, but it was only in the South that disfranchisement was practiced so methodically. The inevitable result was that Blacks were denied meaningful participation in the national economy for decades. Restricted participation also meant that Louisiana's large Black population was able to contribute less to the state's economic growth. In any case, years of government by oligarchy did not lead to long-term prosperity for the State of Louisiana, which is currently one of the poorest states in the Union.

Henry Richardson rose to prominence in state affairs about the same time as Edgar Farrar, his brother-in-law. The two families remained close, although their social circles did not coincide. We know nothing about how Henry's political opinions and prejudices evolved during his years in New Orleans because his personal correspondence after 1880 is not available. Nannie rarely commented on politics, and her letters and diaries show no sign of racist sentiments or opinions. One can reasonably assume that Nannie's moderate ideas influenced Henry more than her brother's extremism.

Henry also favored political reform. He focused his reform efforts on securing more funds for flood control and improving the use of those funds. Over his long career as a State Engineer, he was largely successful in those efforts. Still, some of Henry's descendants have been dismayed by the exploitation and abuse of Black labor—especially forced convict labor—for the construction and repair of Louisiana levees. Of course, Henry was not responsible for choosing the workers; that was the contractors' responsibility. That response obviously avoids the issue, since Henry worked alongside that abuse for many years. In Henry's defense, one could say he had little choice if he were to achieve his objective of protecting Louisiana's rich agricultural lands from inundation. As a civil servant, it was not Henry's role to comment on the moral aspects of forced labor, and he refrained from any such comment.

Despite Henry's poor judgment in choosing the wrong side, we cannot help but admire him for his courage in battle and his fidelity to the cause he chose. We admire him less for continuing to support a government that repressed its Black citizens, but we nevertheless admire him for his long and constant commitment to protecting all of Louisiana's citizens against flood disasters. We especially admire him for the probity he demonstrated throughout his personal and professional life. His contemporaries shared our appreciation of his work and character.

All of Henry and Nannie's children admired their father and were proud of his work and accomplishments. Six of his seven sons emulated their father and became engineers. The men were reasonably successful in their professional lives. All nine of Henry and Nannie's children, except Anna, seemed happily married. We know little about their political beliefs, but they probably continued to believe in white supremacy, as John Francis Richardson did.

On July 28, 1906, he wrote to his mother:

> [T]he whole of our social and political fabric in the South as exemplified in…the control of the Negro situation by brute force and the exercise of practices that are little better than slavery is rotten to the core. The negro if he is to be kept there, must be taught to be honest, he must be taught to labor hand and (sic) hand with the white man, he must be taught to have respect for the laws of the country, and he must have the opportunity…as he learns these lessons of acquiring some wealth and property. And the white people have a lesson to learn too and it is the one that lies at the very root of the race problem and alone makes its solution possible unless the extermination or expatriation of the negro race is resorted to: that great lesson is this: If the ___ _ ___ is to be ___ ___ as it must be, it should not be done by the brute force and iron hand of tyranny but the whites should bring it about by improving their own mental and moral worth and thus rendering the question of their superiority undisputable and impregnable.[10]

John admired his Uncle Ned and named his first child after him. He rejected the permanent exclusion of Blacks that his uncle had advocated, but his paternalistic solution was still demeaning to Black people. Variations of such paternalism spread widely in the United States during the first half of the 20th century. Hidden behind that benevolent sentiment, however, is the assumption that a Black adult is innately inferior and must receive supplementary education—as would a child—to be acceptable in society. Still, John's letter is a sign that his generation favored a more equitable solution to the so-called negro problem.

In any case, the Richardson story does not end here. This book, however, must end because the present author has neither the time nor the historical perspective to continue. Regarding Henry Brown Richardson's more recent descendants, most of those I have met lead happy, successful lives, and most have left Louisiana. None appears to regret the Lost Cause, and all of us have come to believe in the essential equality of mankind. Perhaps we are all unconsciously afflicted to some extent by the blight of systemic racism, but I am confident that we shall overcome.

In closing, I find it most satisfying to see this story as one family's

chaotic 300-year voyage toward the universal brotherhood of humanity. Before setting sail for the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, John Winthrop foresaw "that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us…." Hope remains that the United States may yet become the shining city upon a hill that young William Richardson expected to see when he arrived in Massachusetts less than twenty years later.[11]

Memoranda

Special Collections

In the Notes on the following pages, references to certain special collections have been abridged as shown hereunder:

Richardson family papers, LaRC-1069, Tulane University Special Collections, Jones Hall, New Orleans. After the first citation, this reference is abridged as Tulane.

Henry Brown Richardson Family Papers, Mss. 2987, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA. After the first citation, this reference is abridged as LSU 1.

Bass-Farrar Family Papers, Mss. 4907, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, LA. After the first citation, this reference is abridged as LSU 2.

Richardson and Farrar Family Papers #2892-z, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After the first citation, this reference is abridged as UNC.

Southworth-Dickinson Family Papers, SSC-MS00212, Box 1, Folders 3–7, Sophia Smith Collection of Women's History, Smith College Libraries, Northampton, MA. All of the Reverend David Thurston's letters cited herein are in this repository unless otherwise noted.

Newspapers

Unless otherwise noted, all newspaper articles have been accessed through the website, Newspapers.com.

Notes

1. The Puritans

1. "Elizabeth (Wiseman) Clifford (abt.1628–1667)," WikiTree, accessed March 18, 2025, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Wiseman-293; John J. Currier, *History of Newbury, Mass., 1635–1902* (1902), 314–15; "William Richardson (abt.1630–1657)," WikiTree, accessed January 17, 2026, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Richardson-4034.
2. "Giles Cromwell (abt.1604–1673)," WikiTree, accessed March 16, 2025, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Cromwell-115; John J. Currier, *Ould Newbury: Historical and Biographical Sketches* (1896), 164–67; "Edward Richardson (abt.1617–abt.1685)," WikiTree, accessed January 17, 2026, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Richardson-1597; "Peter Godfrey (abt.1630–1697)," WikiTree, accessed January 17, 2026, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Godfrey-629.
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4. "William Richardson (abt.1630–1657)," WikiTree, accessed March 19, 2025, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Richardson-4034.
5. Currier, *Ould Newbury*, 92; Joshua Coffin, *A Sketch of the History of Newbury, Newburyport, and West Newbury, From 1635 to 1845* (1845), 34–35; Daniel Vickers, "Working the Fields in a Developing Economy: Essex County, Massachusetts, 1630–1675," in *Work and Labor in Early America*, ed. Stephen Innes (University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 58.
6. John Adams Vinton, *The Richardson Memorial […]* (Brown Thurston, 1876), 813–15; Currier, *History of Newbury*, 28–36.
7. "William Richardson," WikiTree.
8. Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982), 43; Stephen Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth: The Economic Culture of Puritan New England* (Norton, 1995), 123.
9. Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *New England's Generation: The Great Migration and the Formation of Society and Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), 96; Coffin, *Newbury*, 53; Currier, *History of Newbury*, 94; Currier, *Ould Newbury*, 119, 142, 146.
10. Vaughn L. Simon, *Descendants of William Richardson and Elizabeth Wiseman* (iUniverse, Inc., 2006), 1–2; Coffin, Newbury, 29, 34; Victor C. Sanborn, *The Grantees and Settlement of Hampton, N.H.* (The Essex Institute, 1917), 11.
11. Simon, *Descendants*, 5–13; Simon, *Descendants*, 13; Joseph Dow, *History of the Town of Hampton, New Hampshire* (1893), 1: 357–58, 562.
12. "Elizabeth (Wiseman) Clifford," WikiTree, accessed March 20, 2025; Simon, *Descendants*, 5; Stephen Innes, *Labor in a New Land: Economy and Society in Seventeenth-Century Springfield* (Princeton University Press, 1983), 94.
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4. Simon, *Descendants*, 5–9, 12–13; Currier, *History of Newbury*, 203–07. Simon mistakenly identified Joseph as Sergeant Richardson in the 1688 tax list, although Joseph and the Sergeant are shown separately in Currier's list. Sergeant Richardson was probably Edward Richardson III, who, therefore, owned the property that Simon attributed to Joseph.
5. Coffin, *Newbury*, 36–38; Currier, History of *Newbury*, 82–85.
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9. Essex Deeds, 18:90; Hazard, *Shoe Industry*, locations 245–68.
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11. Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (Penguin Group, Kindle, 2002), locations 376–90; "Queen Anne's War," Wikipedia, Last revision: March 19, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Queen_Anne%27s_War&oldid=1281323360.
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15. "Raid on Chignecto (1696)," Wikipedia, Last revision: June 11, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Raid_on_Chignecto_(1696)&oldid=1228519250; Peckham, *Colonial Wars*, 50, 52–53.
16. Currier, *History of Newbury*, 521–22; Peckham, *Colonial Wars*, 64–65; "Raid on Grand Pré," Wikipedia, Last revision: February 12, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Raid_on_Grand_Pr%C3%A9&oldid=1275352962.
17. Currier, *History of Newbury*, 527–35; Peckham, *Colonial Wars*, 66–67.

18. Currier, *History of Newbury*, 526, 536–42; Simon, *Descendants*, 7, 19, 25. Simon states on page 7 that Joseph Richardson Sr. was one of Hugh March's snowshoe men. This was more likely his son, Joseph Jr., who was a member of Hugh March's Second Foot Company, according to Simon, page 19.
19. Peckham, *Colonial Wars*, 68–71; "Siege of Port Royal (1710)," Wikipedia, Last revision: 12 February 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Siege_of_Port_Royal_(1710)&oldid=1275355892.
20. Peckham, *Colonial Wars*, 71–72; "Quebec expedition (1711)," Wikipedia, Last revision: February 8, 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Quebec_expedition_(1711)&oldid=1274605842.
21. Simon, 2006, *Descendants*, 14–29; "Andrew Riggs (1681-aft.1772)," WikiTree, Last revision: February 15, 2019, https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Riggs-255; Ancient Thomas Riggs House, Lodging-World.com, accessed April 25, 2025, https://www.lodging-world.com/us/hotels/ancient-thomas-riggs-house-in-gloucester-110129
22. Simon, *Descendants*, 8-12; Essex Deeds, 18:90. Simon misread this deed cited in his note 26; Joseph actually traded ten acres and a house and barn for 18 acres with Abiel Long.
23. Simon, *Descendants*, 17-19, 25, 32, 66-67 ; Essex Deeds 40:139; Essex Deeds, 114:53; Essex Deeds, 84:260; Essex Deeds, 128:58; Essex Deeds, 88:168; Simon, *Descendants*, 66–67. Here, Simon erroneously supposes that Daniel Richardson, born in 1722, was the person who sold two of the above properties, whereas his uncle was actually the carpenter and housewright who sold them. Daniel, the nephew, followed his father's profession; he was a weaver. Simon was not aware that the uncle had a wife named Lydia, as did the nephew. Both wives signed off on the deeds.
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27. Simon, *Descendants*, 26.
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30. Simon, *Descendants*, 27; Coffin, Newbury, 167.
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39. Currier, *History of Newbury*, 357.
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44. Bushman, *Great Awakening*, 32–33; Perry Miller, *Jonathan Edwards* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1981), 142–44.
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69. Currier, *History of Newbury*, 578–79.
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3. The Losers

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7. Rothenberg, *From Market Place to a Market Economy*, 239; Herbert, "Records of the First Church in West Newbury;" Bushman, *Great Awakening*, 32–33.
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